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# THE LONDON QUARTERLY AND HOLBORN REVIEW

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EDITOR: LESLIE F. CHURCH, B.A., Ph.D.

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# The London Quarterly and Holborn Review

LITERATURE      HISTORY      SOCIOLOGY  
RELIGION      THEOLOGY      PHILOSOPHY

Editor: LESLIE F. CHURCH, B.A., Ph.D.

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*but not nationalised*

Despite all the Government is doing for children deprived of a normal home life, the National Children's Home, like all the other recognised voluntary societies, is left free to carry on the work it has pioneered for nearly eighty years. This means it still has to raise its own income—a formidable task when it is remembered that nearly 4,000 girls and boys are being cared for.

We mention this point because there is widespread misunderstanding of the Home's present position. The need for funds is as great as ever, and it is hoped that you will keep on helping. In fact, even more support is required to meet the increased cost of maintaining this important national service.

## NATIONAL CHILDREN'S HOME

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# Editorial Comments

PRINCIPAL P. T. FORSYTH

**Y**OU must live with people to know their problems, and live with God in order to solve them.' Those who came under the personal influence of Dr. Forsyth learnt the truth of these words as he talked with them. Few men have sensed more quickly the problems of their fellows and few have been able more surely to provide a solution. He lived with God. Prophet rather than a systematic theologian he was also a scholar and in the truest sense an evangelist.

Coming back from France in 1916, the present writer was taken for an hour's refresher course for chaplains and ministers to an upper room in Whitefield's Tabernacle. The tragedy of the second battle of the Somme was obsessing him. It was not easy to listen to a closely-reasoned lecture on the Atonement, but suddenly the speaker, Peter Taylor Forsyth, turned on his war-weary audience and said: 'But brethren, God has not finished with us, when He has sterilized our souls against evil. It is just then He waits to fertilize them for good.' For a moment one at least of his hearers felt the clouds of battle rolled back and the light of a new hope breaking over the world. Here was no romantic or sentimental piety, no theological speculation conceived by a hermit withdrawn from the realities, but a gospel that challenged even the tragedy of the Somme. 'So also our virile sinfulness turns from the criticisms of fastidious religion to the blood of Christ and the cost at which we are scarcely saved.' With a new note of urgency, Forsyth continued: 'It was not Galahad or Arthur that drew Christ from heaven. It was a Lancelot race. It was a tragic issue of man's passion that called out the glory of Christ.'

To mark the centenary of Forsyth's birth many of his books are being republished in a uniform edition by the Independent Press. They will, we imagine, be received gratefully by a generation which did not know him, and they will be welcomed eagerly by those who sat at his feet.

An anthology<sup>1</sup> has been compiled by the Rev. H. Escott, M.A., who has written a concise but admirable appraisal of the man and his work. He reminds us that Dr. Forsyth anticipated some of the dangers which now threaten a world that is disillusioned by what T. D. Meadley calls 'the doctrine of inevitable progress and the innate perfectibility of human nature'. Writing in the *London Quarterly Review* in 1905<sup>2</sup> Forsyth protested against the illegitimate extension of biological theories of evolution into non-biological areas. In this lengthy article, written over forty years ago, he spoke as a seer to whom the problems of our later day were already real.

In similar fashion Mr. Escott affirms Forsyth anticipated the unity which New Testament critics of our own time have stressed. 'The fact is, there is very little value in the "discoveries" of men like Dibelius, Rawlinson, and Dodd

<sup>1</sup> *Peter Taylor Forsyth: Director of Souls* (Epworth Press, 6s.)

<sup>2</sup> P. T. Forsyth, 'Some Christian Aspects of Evolution', *London Quarterly Review*, October 1905.

and the Formgeschichte school that is not found *in germ* in the writings of Forsyth.'

As Dr. Rowlands has said, he was primarily interested, not in theology as a system, but in the Gospel as redemption and life. For twenty-seven years he held successive pastorates in churches in Shipley, Hackney, Manchester, Leicester, and Cambridge, and during this period ceased to be a man whose chief concern was 'purely scientific criticism'. He soon developed a passion for souls and a new sense of responsibility. In *Positive Preaching* there is this striking passage: 'I could not treat the matter as an academic quest. I was in a relation of life, duty, and responsibility for others. I could not contemplate conclusions without asking how they would affect these people and my word to them in doubt, death, grief, or repentance.' Referring to this stage in his spiritual development, Escott says: 'Henceforth there was only one way open to him—the crucifixion of the very culture he had prized almost above everything else. His rich and varied endowments of mind and imagination were laid from now on at the foot of the Cross of Christ.'

In a sympathetic and critical study of his prophetic theology, his style, his link with Barthianism and his right to be called a Director of Souls, Mr. Escott writes with force and conviction. At times he crystallizes his findings in striking epigrams. For example, in considering Forsyth 'as a Barthian before Barth' he finds a peculiar quality of compassion in the Aberdonian. 'Forsyth never forgets humanity in his zeal for the Word.' After quoting John A. Hutton's classic passages on Karl Barth he points out the admirable balance which Forsyth kept and concludes '*like Jesus he loved the lily and was faithful to the Cross*'.

Though Dr. Forsyth was influenced by Hegel, Ritschl, Kahler, Zahn, Kierkegaard, and Pascal he owed perhaps more to Frederick Denison Maurice, 'who gave him his first love for theology'. He had much in common with Dora Greenwell and shared with her that attractive figure of speech—the soul's magnetic north.

In considering his style, Mr. Escott draws a striking comparison between Peter Taylor Forsyth and Gerard Manley Hopkins. Both, he says, were as 'alien to the idiom of their day' as they were to the spiritual blindness and lethargy.

The last of the eight sections in the anthology—*Pastoralia*—consists of notes, taken by one of his students, of his intimate addresses delivered at week-night services in Hackney College. They sounded so universal a note that they reveal him as a director of the soul rather than as a director of souls. They point his hearers, inevitably, to the Cross of Christ—God's travail for the soul of mankind.

Sometimes he warns the enthusiasts: 'It is possible to be so active in the service of Christ as to forget to love Him. Many a man preaches Christ but gets in front of Him by the multiplicity of his own works. It will be your ruin if you do! Christ can do without your works—what he wants is you. Yet if He really has you He will have all your works.'

In almost every address he returns to the central fact of redemption: 'God's greatest name is not Creator, but Re-creator, Redeemer. It is a tremendous thing to be able to say that the wreck and ruin of the world was as

much within His power as the making of it at first from chaos. God is faithful to the souls He made, and always will be. He is faithful to the souls he made and died for, as He remakes them by suffering, first His own suffering, and then theirs. Our very pain is a sign of God's remembrance of us, for it would be much worse if we were left in ghastly isolation. Be thankful that God cares enough for you to be angry with you.'

Time has proved that Forsyth had true prophetic insight, and his work has great value for the preacher and pastor of today. In writing his appraisal and giving us so balanced an anthology Mr. Escott has done a real service. He will, we believe, send the older generation back with joy, to an old master, and he will introduce to the younger men a preacher and prophet whom they will honour for his honesty and reverence for his fidelity to Truth.

### SHOLEM ASCH AND THE PALESTINE PROBLEM

The work of Sholem Asch has earned for him the title of 'the historian of the common folk'. His books have had a wide sale in America and in them he has shown a sympathetic understanding of many of the problems which trouble the man in the street. So long as these remain unsolved—whether in Berlin or Moscow, London or New York—they menace the future of mankind. In his recent book, *East River*, he makes a moving appeal for greater tolerance in our racial, religious and social relationships.\* The bitter feuds between Jew and Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Materialist will only be ended, he says, by a sincere effort to understand 'the other fellow's point of view'.

Outrages committed by a lawless minority must not be held to represent the attitude of a whole nation. The policy which created the Jewish concentration camps and gas-chambers produced a situation in which the terrorist and the gangster could flourish.

It is because he has been so close a student of the average man in Germany and America that this Polish Jew's opinion on the Palestine problem is worth consideration.

Unlike some other members of the Jewish community in the United States, Sholem Asch condemns the crimes of the terrorists in Palestine, and pleads that his people shall not be judged by the behaviour of a few individuals. In an interview, in New York, last October, he said, 'Collective responsibility has been a curse to the Jews throughout their history'. The last ten years have brought untold suffering to the Jews in Europe. Some of those who survived the torture of the concentration camps have grown bitter, believing that the rest of the world was ignorant of or indifferent to the tremendous tragedy. Bitterness became desperation and the result has been seen in a series of irresponsible outrages.

With commendable candour he said: 'Till now the crime of taking innocent people as hostages and murdering noble men like Bernadotte, who have tried to bring peace, was the prerogative of the Nazis. The Jewish people were the victims of their hate, and at least one-third lost their lives.

\* Sholem Asch, *East River* (Macdonald & Co., 12s. 6d.).

There is no Jewish family today which hasn't lost a member to this hate. When some of us use similar methods, it is not only a crime against humanity, it is a crime against Jewish destiny, a humiliation of our holy victims, and a stabbing in the back of the best interests of Jews all over the world.'

Speaking of those unscrupulous people who have exploited this desperation for criminal ends, he continued: 'They are undermining the young state of Israel in the year of her birth and are endangering the safety of the Jewish people all over the world by spreading, through their deeds, the poison of anti-Semitism.'

One is reminded that the Foreign Minister of Iraq said, many months ago, that one of the essential conditions of a Palestinian settlement was the prosecution and expulsion of all terrorist and subversive elements from the Holy Land. The more definitely these criminals and their organizations are denounced and outlawed, the more hopefully we may look for an agreement between Jews and Arabs and an appreciable advance towards the peace of the world.

'It is my sincere hope,' says Sholem Asch, 'that, when all the Jewish victims of the Nazis, some of whom are still in concentration camps, at last find a haven in the home of their ancestors, a new spirit of tolerance, of brotherly love and understanding for humanity, the spirit of our prophets, will again live among our people.'

It is by no means certain that all these tragic sufferers would prefer to begin a new life in Palestine rather than, let us say, in the United States or some other free country, but the appeal of Sholem Asch cannot be ignored. His attitude is certainly more representative of true Jewish opinion than is that of Ben Hecht and his followers. Peace will not be achieved until the relationship between Israel and the terrorist movements is made plain to the whole world, and in particular, to the statesmen and people of Britain and America.

### THE NEW YOUTH CHARTER

One of the most hopeful developments of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam was the formation of a Youth Department. To those who are prepared to take the long view, the policy of this new organization has a direct bearing on the future of mankind. It does not advocate short cuts nor does it plan sensational or revolutionary escapades. 'The Youth Department must always have as its ultimate aim the development of the means for the united witness in speech and action of *all* younger members of the Christian Churches. It also means that the Youth Department should encourage young people to participate fully and responsibly in the life and witness of their own Churches and of the World Council.' So runs the opening passage in the official statement on policy. It continues in its second paragraph: 'In practice the Youth Department is charged by the World Council with direct responsibility for developing the ecumenical concern of the younger members of the Churches and for providing channels for united ecumenical action on the world level.' It concludes: 'It is the policy of the Youth Department to encourage the largest possible measure of participation by young people them-



selves in the formulation of policy and direction of activities, at the local, national, regional and world levels.'

Under the joint chairmanship of Mlle. Madeleine Barot and the Rev. Daniel T. Niles, B.A., B.D., the Department is facing its problems and seizing its opportunities with a sense of responsibility and urgency. The Secretary, Miss Jean M. Fraser (Geneva, 17 Route de Malagnou), is prepared to send the bi-monthly *News Sheet* with its information of ecumenical activity and accounts of youth work in many distant places, to representative people in return for other youth publications and news items.

The following is the full text of the Charter which we feel marks a chapter in the history of the ecumenical movement:

#### CHARTER OF THE YOUTH DEPARTMENT

1. The Assembly of the World Council of Churches approves the setting up of a Youth Department of the World Council with a special Committee. The Youth Department and its Committee are authorized to represent the World Council of Churches on the World Christian Youth Commission, which is the organ of collaboration between the various international Christian movements and agencies concerned with youth work.

2. The primary task of the Youth Department is to help the Churches and through them their youth organizations in giving to their youth a sense of participation in, and responsibility to, the Church.

The Youth Department fulfils this function in the following ways:

(a) By providing an avenue for co-operative study of the needs of youth throughout the world and for the planning of programmes for meeting their needs and for the advancement of the Christian faith among youth.

(b) By providing a medium for fellowship and exchange of experience among the leaders of the Church youth organizations and movements of the world.

(c) By organizing international and ecumenical meetings for Church youth.

(d) By publishing studies and ecumenical programmes for the use of Church youth. A first undertaking of the Department should be a survey of all the existing national and international Church or Church-related youth organizations and movements.

(e) By assisting member Churches anywhere in the world upon their invitation in the development of national ecumenical youth co-operation where effective channels of such co-operation do not already exist.

(f) By interpreting the convictions and concerns of Church youth to the World Council of Churches and its constituent bodies and by arranging opportunities for young Church leaders to follow closely the work of important ecumenical committees and conferences thus carrying forward traditions established by the conferences on Faith and Order and Life and Work.

(g) By interpreting the life and work of the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement to the youth of the Churches. This could be facilitated through visits, conferences and publications.

(h) By stimulating and co-ordinating financial and other types of

assistance by Church youth groups for the church youth agencies and movements in countries which need outside help.

(i) By collaborating with independent international Christian youth agencies and movements which are concerned with youth, in ecumenical activities which are of common concern.

3. The Youth Department shall be directed by a committee appointed by the responsible bodies of the World Council, including representatives of the main confessional families and the major geographical areas.

4. The Youth Department shall sustain close working relationships with the member Churches of the World Council and through them with their youth departments. It will also work with national ecumenical youth agencies. Since the World Council is a World Council of Churches, the youth movements of the Churches are organically related to the Council through their respective Churches. The Youth Department of the Council, therefore, does not ask youth movements to affiliate themselves directly with the Youth Department.

5. In accordance with its statement of functions (Section 2, above) and on the basis of the authorization in Section 1 above the Youth Department will collaborate with the international Christian youth movements which are concerned with ecumenical activities.

In doing so, it takes its stand on the two following principles:

(a) That the Christian youth movements which are organized independently have made and are making special contributions in such realms as evangelism, ecumenical education, and lay initiative.

(b) That, in recognition of these special contributions, it is desirable that close collaboration be encouraged between the independent youth movements on the one hand and the Churches and through them with Church youth movements on the other hand.

This collaboration between the Youth Department of the World Council and the independent youth movements finds its expression in:

(a) Their common responsibility for the organizing and following up of World Conferences of Christian Youth.

(b) The organization of the World Christian Youth Commission as their common origin for consultation and planning.

6. In view of the fact that the independent Christian youth movements have among their affiliated movements a certain number which are in close organic relationship with member Churches of the World Council of Churches, these independent Christian youth movements are invited to accept a consultative relationship to the Youth Department and its committee.

## KINGSHIP AND THE GODS

The work of Ivan Engnell, *Studies in Divine Kingship in the Ancient Near East*, contains a bibliography which occupies twenty-three pages. Though the subject has been so extensively discussed, the new book by Henri Frankfort is an original and most useful contribution. Under the title *Kingship and the Gods*, the Research Professor of Oriental Archaeology in the University of Chicago has written a volume which not only draws a sharp distinction be-



tween the ideas of kingship in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Palestine, but conducts a close examination of the life and thought of the pre-Greek world.<sup>4</sup>

Amongst the *graffiti* scrawled on the monuments of the Pharaohs by wandering Greeks are the words ἦλθον καὶ ἐθαύμασα—'I came and marvelled'. This is the confession of Professor Frankfort as he concludes his study, and this, we believe, will be the impression of those who read his book. He is convinced that 'the structures of thought in which pre-Greek man apprehended his world are as unprecedented an achievement as his more tangible monuments'.

His findings are based on a critical study of art forms as revealed in pictorial and plastic expressions, and on the texts, ceremonial ritual, and festivals of the early Near Eastern civilizations. He discovers a fundamental difference between the spirit of Mesopotamia and of Egypt. 'The Hebrews, who were familiar with these cultures, fanatically rejected the highest values recognized by both.'

One of the most impressive qualities of this fascinating book is its sincerity. The author has travelled widely, and done much valuable work whilst in charge of excavations in Egypt and Babylonia, and this fact gives his critical studies an authentic colouring. He writes as one who knows the territory and its physical conditions, and is able to bridge the centuries and live again in the city of Nippur with the Sumerian kings or walk with Menes in Egypt.

He is convinced that kingship was held to be the very basis of civilization by the people of the ancient Near East. On it depended security, peace, and justice. 'If ever a political institution functioned with the assent of the governed, it was the monarchy which built the pyramids with forced labour and drained the Assyrian peasantry by ceaseless wars.' In spite of this Professor Frankfort claims that the ancients never thought of kingship as a political institution. They conceived human life as 'part of a widely spreading network of connections which reached beyond the local and the natural communities into the hidden depths of nature and the powers that rule nature. . . . Whatever was significant was embedded in the life of the cosmos, and it was precisely the king's function to maintain the harmony of that integration'.

In Mesopotamia the king was a mighty leader, a great man, whose business it was to maintain harmonious relations between human society and the supernatural powers. He was himself a member of the community and shared in 'the cosmic crises which the seasonal changes represented'. Everywhere the people in the Plain of the Two Rivers saw a strife between divine and demoniac, cosmic, and chaotic powers. Their king had a unique function but, because he was a man, the community retained some independence.

In Egypt the people thought of the universe as static. They did not feel either uncertain or afraid, because their king was himself a god. Their security was, however, purchased at a price. The community, believing in their ruler's divinity, 'sacrificed all liberty for the sake of a never changing integration of society and nature'. In their art they never portrayed Pharaoh as the mere equal of other figures, except when he was shown in the company of other gods. Since the death of such a king brought about a crisis, heavy

<sup>4</sup> Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (University of Chicago Press, 27s. 6d. net).

with the threat of possible disaster, an elaborate and dramatic scheme was evolved to ensure the smooth and logical sequence of the royal succession. The coronation of the new king, the transfiguration of his predecessor and the mystery play of the succession were important events in the crisis. The scheme 'mitigated the risks of the succession and had the further advantage of conforming to the mythological pattern of "Horus appearing in the arms of his father Osiris"'. The heir-apparent was, therefore, appointed co-regent with his royal (and divine) father.

Though kingship in Egypt and Mesopotamia appears to be as old as human history, the origins seem to be quite distinct. The Mesopotamian conception has its roots in Africa rather than in Western Asia.

'The ancient Near East,' says Henri Frankfort, 'knew a third kind of king. In addition to the god incarnate who was Pharaoh, and the chosen servant of the gods who ruled Mesopotamia, we find a hereditary leader whose authority derived from descent and was originally co-extensive with kingship.' The third conception was found in the peripheral regions of the Near East—in Palestine and Syria, Anatolia, and Persia where foreign invaders took charge of peoples whose native civilization was weak.

If kingship counted in Egypt as a function of the gods, and in Mesopotamia as a divinely ordained political order, the Hebrews knew that they had introduced it on their own initiative, in imitation of others and under the strain of an emergency (cf. I Samuel 8<sup>19-20</sup>). Their king was not a necessary bond between the people and God. 'On the contrary it was in the kingless period that the people had been singled out by Yahweh and that they had been bound as a whole, by the Covenant of Sinai' (cf. Deuteronomy 14<sup>1-2</sup>). The institutions which originated during the Exodus were held to be superior to kingship, and the king's functions were exercised in the secular and not the sacred sphere. 'The transcendentalism of Hebrew religion prevented kingship from assuming the profound significance which it possessed in Egypt and Mesopotamia.' It was not the king's business to integrate society and nature and, indeed, such integration was impossible. 'Only obedience to the will of the Creator could bring peace and salvation.' The sun and stars, the wind and the rain were His creatures and served Him (cf. Deuteronomy 4<sup>19</sup>, Psalm 19). The Hebrew king was subject to the judgement of God, as were all the Hebrew people.

Whether one agrees with all the findings of this important book or not, it will be invaluable to the student of the civilizations of the ancient Near East.

The study proceeds on parallel lines in its consideration of the origin and function of kingship in Egypt and Mesopotamia. We could have welcomed an equally detailed consideration of the Hebrew concept outlined in an epilogue which is all too short. Professor Frankfort has, nevertheless, given us a volume for which we are grateful. It will, we hope, be followed by further studies on cognate subjects. The book is enriched by more than fifty photographic illustrations which are invaluable to its argument. Like its predecessor, *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man*, it is 'meant for the layman but is the work of a scholar', and will help many readers to a better understanding of what is almost glibly called Western culture.

LESLIE F. CHURCH

# Articles

## ONE OF OUR CONQUERORS

ONE MORNING in the early spring of 1876 a young man of nineteen stepped off the boat train at Euston Station and was absorbed into the vast indifference of London. He was a tall, raw-boned Dubliner with red hair and a noticeably white face. He had just thrown up a job as cashier in a land agent's office in Dublin with a salary of eighty-five pounds a year and good prospects. In London he had no prospects at all, but he had not come to London to find a job; he had come to conquer it. Needless to say, London was not interested. His name was George Bernard Shaw; but that did not mean a thing.

It is impossible to think of Shaw otherwise than as a contemporary, yet when we go back to that year of his beginnings we step into a period of history which now seems incredibly remote. The seemingly endless reign of Queen Victoria had already lasted nearly forty years and still had a quarter of a century to run. At present she had for her chief adviser her trusted friend Mr. Disraeli, whom later in the year she would have the satisfaction of raising to the peerage as Earl of Beaconsfield; moreover, the alarming Mr. Gladstone was not only out of office, but in retirement. On the defeat of the Liberal Government, two years previously, he had resigned the leadership of the Party, so that whatever might happen in the future she had the best of reasons to hope that she would not again be afflicted with a Prime Minister who talked to her as though she were a public meeting; the new leader of the Party, Lord Hartington, never talked like that, even when he *was* addressing a public meeting. It was perhaps too much to hope that Mr. Gladstone was spending his leisure contentedly reading Homer and felling trees at Hawarden; and indeed at this very time—though she did not know it—he was grinding an axe which he meant to lay, with all the force of the righteous indignation he could always call up at command, to the roots of the Turkish Empire. For this was the year of the Bulgarian atrocities, and the Conservative Cabinet had shamefully refused to join with the other Great Powers in forcing Turkey to reform her system of government. Mr. Gladstone spoke vehemently in the House of Commons against this cynical disregard of public morality, and followed up his protest with the famous 'bag and baggage' pamphlet, and a speech on Blackheath to his constituents in the Greenwich Division. Two years later came the Congress of Berlin, from which Lord Beaconsfield returned in triumph with his tidings of 'peace with honour', but it was peace on Mr. Gladstone's terms rather than his own, for it was, in Lord Morley's words, a 'virtual ratification of the policy of bag and baggage'. In spite of this the agitation against Turkish misrule went on, and reached its culmination in the Midlothian campaigns of 1879 and 1880 which led to the fall of Lord Beaconsfield and the formation of Mr. Gladstone's second administration.

It is safe to assume that Bernard Shaw watched these events with much interest. As an Irishman, he knew all about oppressed nations, but he also

knew what the Irish people were like, and he was able therefore to make a pretty good guess at the truth about the Bulgarians. In Mr. Gladstone's heated imagination they were idealized as a martyr race, a civilized and Christian people mercilessly oppressed by 'the one great anti-human specimen of humanity', the unspeakable Turk. It was a picture which Shaw, with his cooler temperament and critical intellect, instinctively felt to be false, and there can be little doubt that it was the recollection of this gorgeous froth that moved him, eighteen years afterwards, to write his 'anti-romantic comedy', *Arms and the Man*. Shaw was a teetotaller by temperament; he abhorred excess of every kind, and the spectacle of Mr. Gladstone, 'inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity', could not fail to repel him. You cannot base a foreign policy on romantic illusions, however generous. People must clear their minds of cant and recognize the Bulgarians for what they were, a half-barbaric people, unwashed and illiterate. Set them free by all means, but let no one imagine that they are fit to take their place among the civilized nations of Europe. Their childishness, vanity, political ineptitude and general incompetence may prove to be just as mischievous in the long run as the inhumanity of the Turks themselves. European wars always start in the Balkans.

This coolness of judgement and unflinching realism are claimed by Shaw as typical merits of the Irish mind; he says that he owes his own clear-sightedness to the fact that he is an Irishman. The John Bull of legend is not an Englishman at all, he is a sort of kidnapped Irishman; the real Englishman is an incurable romantic who lives by preference in a mental fog of imagination, poetry, sentimentality, and cant. This theme is developed amusingly in the Preface to *John Bull's Other Island*:

When I see the Irishman everywhere standing clear-headed, sane, hardily callous to the boyish sentimentalities, susceptibilities, and credulities that make the Englishman the dupe of every charlatan and the idolater of every numskull, I perceive that Ireland is the only spot on earth which still produces the ideal Englishman of history. . . . [The Irishman] is never quite the hysterical, nonsense-crammed, fact-proof, truth-terrified, unballasted sport of all the bogey panics and all the silly enthusiasms that now calls itself 'God's Englishman'. England cannot do without its Irish and its Scots today, because it cannot do without at least a little sanity.

Perhaps Shaw judged all Irishmen by himself; it is extremely likely that he judged all Englishmen by Mr. Gladstone. It was said by Mr. Balfour<sup>1</sup> that Gladstone's great strength as a speaker lay in the conviction which he always had that he was right. But that is a state of mind which can be self-induced almost at will; if you want to believe that you are right it is the easiest thing in the world to work yourself up to the proper pitch of emotional conviction, and Shaw declares that every Englishman plays this trick upon himself whenever he finds it convenient to do so. 'How can what an Englishman believes be heresy?' exclaims the chaplain in *St. Joan*. 'It is a contradiction in terms.' Shaw could never have been a Liberal, for Liberalism is a romantic creed, and he was quite sure that no one who thinks romantically is capable of seeing things as they really are. Penny-plain facts make no appeal to his mind; they must be heightened and idealized, steeped in the colours of his own emotions,

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by Lord Morley in *Life of Gladstone*.

forced into conformity with his favourite theories, falsified, and made to mean what he wants them to mean. You will never make sense of anything if you think in that way, and the first thing to be done is to rid your minds of it. 'Romance is the great heresy to be swept off from art and life', for it is 'spurious, cheap, and vulgar.'

This is the conclusion he had reached by the time he wrote the Preface to the four 'pleasant' plays (*Arms and the Man*, *Candida*, *The Man of Destiny*, and *You Never Can Tell*), from which the last quotations are made. The date of the Preface was 1898, and we can see now that it was a favourable moment for such a declaration. The Victorian Age was coming to an end and a new spirit was taking control of men's minds. The spell of romanticism was broken at last and men were beginning to distrust the sentimental and emotional convictions on which, under its influence, they had hitherto acted without hesitation. It is true that the backwash of Victorianism still had to be reckoned with. In 1906 it was strong enough to sweep the Liberal Party to power on a Gladstonian programme; that indeed was their greatest triumph, but—though no one then suspected it—it was also their last. A change was coming over the minds of men; and while it was finding expression in many different ways, it so happened that Shaw was endowed with just those qualities—dry lucidity of intellect and brilliant utterance, impishness and audacity and an instinct for showmanship—which were needed to popularize it and give it currency.

It is not altogether easy to state the nature of the change, but a rough way of putting it is to say that sensibility was being replaced by sense. We may get at it, perhaps, if we consider some of the neologisms and catch-phrases that are now in general use; such expressions as factual thinking, reportage, documentary art, and 'getting down to brass tacks'. The romantic age has been succeeded by the factual age, Liberalism by social science, mass-meeting oratory by Fabian pamphlets and the dry research work of the London School of Economics. The world is not held together by nebulous sentiments but by 'brass tacks', which are tangible things that you can handle, weigh, and study. 'If as much pains had been taken a century ago to make us all understand Ricardo's law of rent as to learn our catechisms, the face of the world would have been changed for the better.'<sup>2</sup> The socialism of the nineteenth century, drawing its inspiration from generous sentiments and moral enthusiasms, served a useful purpose in getting up steam, but it would all have ended in steam if it had not been brought under control by the new social technicians whose business it is to understand the mechanics of society, to track down the maladjustments that set up all the heat and friction, and make the necessary adaptations and repairs. To put it another way, the cure of the body politic is not a job for exorcists, but for dispassionate workers with a scientific training. This is the change of outlook which has taken place during the present century, and it is Shaw more than any man who has coached, cajoled, and bullied us into it.

His qualifications for the task have already been touched upon; he himself, with that mock effrontery which he deliberately affects—in preference to mock modesty—has explained them in the Preface, 'Mainly about Myself', to his first volume of plays.<sup>3</sup> He got his first clue to them, he says—

<sup>2</sup> Preface to *Misalliance*.

<sup>3</sup> *Plays Unpleasant*.



from a friend of mine, a physician who had devoted himself specially to ophthalmic surgery. He tested my eyesight one evening, and informed me that it was quite uninteresting to him because it was 'normal'. I naturally took this to mean that it was like everybody else's; but he rejected this construction as paradoxical, and hastened to explain to me that I was an exceptional and highly fortunate person optically, 'normal' sight conferring the power of seeing things accurately, and being enjoyed by about only ten per cent. of the population, the remaining ninety per cent. being abnormal. I immediately perceived the explanation of my want of success in fiction. My mind's eye, like my body's, was 'normal': it saw things differently from other people's eyes, and saw them better.

We may or may not agree with that self-estimate, but the passage is interesting for another reason, for it is typical of the methods he has deliberately adopted to provoke our attention to what he has to say. Chesterton once said of someone that 'he talked a great deal about himself because he was *not* an egoist', and the same may be said of Shaw. He is not an egoist; if he were, he would have more regard for appearances and take good care not to play the fool or make an exhibition of himself. He plays the showman because he has something to display which he believes that it very much concerns the public to see, and he is not above coming out in front of his booth and practising all the tricks of platform-patter that he knows in order to catch their attention. The secret of successful propaganda, he affirms, is to 'find the right thing to say, and then say it with the utmost levity'. Yet he is naturally of a nervous temperament; it was only by resolutely fighting down his nervousness that he forced himself, in his early days, to appear as a public speaker on any platform or at any street corner where he could get an audience. The periodical attacks of migraine from which he suffered during the greater part of his life were no doubt the price that he had to pay for doing violence to his feelings. They did not leave him until he was seventy, and it is significant that it was only then that he could be said to have won his audience over. It is only the licensed fool who is allowed to tell the unflattering truth to kings, and Shaw had to establish his position as jester in the court of King Demos in order to get a hearing for the fundamentally serious things he wanted to say.

He seems to have known almost from birth that his work in life was to be writing of some sort, but it was only very slowly that he found himself. During his first nine years in London his literary earnings amounted exactly to six pounds, and five pounds of that was obtained by writing an advertisement for a patent medicine! He lived, as he frankly admits, by sponging on his mother, who had given up her ne'er-do-well husband as a bad job and come to London to earn her own living by teaching singing. The relations between mother and son were entirely unsentimental. She gave him board and lodging, but did not otherwise bother about him, and for his part he was content to scrape along anyhow, living on vegetables and at times going about literally in rags, as long as he was left alone to practise writing in peace. It was at a meeting which he attended at the Memorial Hall in Farringdon Street one day in 1882, when he was twenty-six years of age, that he at last got on the track of the thing he was really searching after—a set of beliefs which he could preach with conviction, a doctrine and a message. The

speaker was Henry George, and he was advocating his favourite remedy for all political ills, land nationalization and the single tax. Shaw was sufficiently interested to wish to learn more; he bought a copy of George's book, *Progress and Poverty*, for sixpence, and it so excited him that he brought the subject up at a meeting of Hyndman's Democratic Federation, but was told that no one was qualified to discuss the question until he had read Karl Marx.

Off I went to the British Museum, where I read *Das Kapital* in Deville's French translation—it had not then been done in English. That was the turning-point in my career. Marx was a revelation. His abstract economics, I discovered later, were wrong, but he rent the veil. He opened my eyes to the facts of history and civilization, gave me an entirely fresh conception of the universe, provided me with a purpose and a mission in life. I went back to the Democratic Federation, burning with the new zeal, full of the new gospel, only to find that not a soul there except Hyndman and myself had read a word of Marx.

Here was another instance of the mental sloppiness and dishonesty he was coming to detest. He seemed to encounter it at every turn, and it led him to resolve never to engage in controversy unless he really knew what he was talking about. He was not scholarly in the sense in which that word is generally understood; the education he was supposed to have received at the Wesleyan Connexional School (now Wesley College) in Dublin had been perfunctory and had entirely failed to interest him. He does not complain of that; he takes the view that a formal education is rather a disadvantage for an intelligent man, as it almost always deflects his vision and makes it difficult for him to see things as they really are: 'those who have been taught most know least.' He says that he was never able to learn anything which did not interest him, but where his interest was aroused he could always assimilate the relevant facts with great rapidity, and he had moreover the swiftness of understanding that goes with genius. He became a sedulous frequenter of the Reading Room at the British Museum, mastering all that he could get to know about economics, so that when he entered the lists of controversy it was as a champion who, though his favourite weapon was the rapier, could on occasion level an exceedingly heavy lance against a worthy opponent.

It was while working at the British Museum that he first made the acquaintance of William Archer, through whose influence he at last obtained regular work as a journalist; first as a book-reviewer for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, under the editorship of W. T. Stead, and then as art critic on the *World*, the journal for which Archer himself was acting as dramatic critic. Shaw did not know anything about the technicalities of painting, but he characteristically regarded that as an advantage; 'you can soon learn all about pictures by just looking at them', he declared cheerfully, and the freshness of his articles justified his confidence. But one thing which Shaw did understand was music. His mother, as we have seen, was a teacher of singing, and from her he had inherited a fine ear and an excellent voice. His great enthusiasm, of course, was for Wagner, who at that time was derided by academic musicians, but his knowledge of music in general and opera in particular was extensive and sound, and in 1882 he obtained the appointment of music critic on the *Star*



at a salary of two guineas a week—the first regular income he had enjoyed in the twelve years since he came to London, and he was now thirty-one years of age. Two years later he transferred to the *World* at five pounds a week, and four years after that passed on to the *Saturday Review*. This gave him a platform from which at last he could make himself heard, and he did not let the opportunity slip. On the face of it, music criticism would appear to be about the last branch of journalism in which a writer could hope to make a national reputation, but Shaw managed to get past the musical people to the public at large, and by this time he had learned to write with a brilliance which would have made the obscurest subject scintillate: it was not enough for him to set the Thames on fire; he pointed his incendiary pen at the Royal Academy of Music, and the Regent's Canal itself burst into flames. People who did not know the difference between a crotchet and a semibreve and hadn't ear enough to stand up when the National Anthem was played read his *Saturday Review* articles for the sheer fun of the thing. The independence of his opinions and the calculated violence with which he expressed them, his merciless exposure of musical insincerity and ridicule of the cant of criticism, the studied impudence with which he trailed his coat and flourished his shillelagh, provided about the best literary entertainment that London had to offer. The maddening thing was that he knew what he was talking about; if he had the flashy wings of the dragon-fly, there was no denying that he settled in the right place and drove his sting unerringly. He made enemies, of course—wit is the last thing for which a man can hope to be forgiven; nor is it likely that they were conciliated when, at the close of his career in music criticism, he protested that he had always tried to practise moderation:

It has taken me nearly twenty years of studied self-restraint, aided by the natural decay of my faculties, to make myself dull enough to be accepted as a serious person by the British public; and I am not sure that I am not still regarded as a suspicious character in some quarters.

His chance acquaintance with William Archer turned out to be a decisive event in another way. It was Archer who translated Ibsen and brought his plays to the English stage, and in Ibsen Shaw found the answer to his deep discontent with the drama of the day. In 1895 Frank Harris became Editor of the *Saturday Review*, and Shaw gave up music criticism to write about the theatre. He found it a sink, not of iniquity, but of silliness. Even Irving and Ellen Terry at the Lyceum were wasting their superb talent on tawdry melodrama, such as *The Corsican Brothers* and *The Bells*; or when they did play Shakespeare it was in a mangled version, for Irving did not hesitate to tinker with the plays in order to improve his own acting parts. The play was nothing in itself; it was merely a vehicle for the exhibition of the players, and anything was good enough that provided situations which they could exploit to their own advantage. Even the 'well-made' plays of Pinero and Henry Arthur Jones were empty of ideas; they were built up skilfully enough out of the technical tricks of the theatre, but they were, as George Sampson says, 'theatrical inventions in which theatrically conceived figures behaved, at theatrical crises, in the expected theatrical manner'. The theatre was a world

of its own, and the world outside the theatre might not have existed for all the notice the playwrights took of it. But Ibsen had brought the drama face to face with life. He had peopled the stage with real persons and placed them in situations where they had to meet the very real problems, moral and social, with which anyone living in a modern community may be confronted at any time. He had shown that these problems can be discussed in the theatre as effectively as in the newspapers—more effectively, indeed, for in the theatre they were particularized, clothed with flesh and blood, and shown to be something which could not be lived out unless it was also thought out. This was exactly Shaw's conception of a living drama.

All the highest literature is journalism [he says]. The man who writes about himself and his own time is the only man who writes about all people and about all times. . . . And so, let others cultivate what they call literature; journalism for me!<sup>4</sup>

If the theatre was to be regenerated, it must be baptized in the waters of life. Ibsen had showed the way, and Shaw became his prophet to the British public. In 1891 he published *The Quintessence of Ibsenism*, but what he preached he had already begun to practise.

I turned my hand to play-writing [he says in the Preface to his second volume of plays (*Plays Pleasant*, 1898)] when a great deal of talk about 'the New Drama', followed by the actual establishment of a 'New Theatre' (the Independent), threatened to end in the humiliating discovery that the New Drama, in England at least, was a figment of the revolutionary imagination. This was not to be endured. I had rashly taken up the case; and rather than let it collapse I manufactured the evidence.

Only one of the plays in his first volume, *Widowers' Houses* (produced at the Independent Theatre in 1892), actually reached the stage before it appeared in print. The title of the volume, *Plays Unpleasant*, was deliberately provocative, for it was meant to emphasize the fact that he was forcing upon the notice of the public disagreeable aspects of contemporary life about which there was, in the theatre especially, a conspiracy of silence. *Widowers' Houses* had for its theme the enjoyment of independent means derived from the rents of slum property. *The Philanderer* was a comedy which reversed the romantic convention that woman is coy and waits to be wooed, and revived 'the old Shakespearean trick of making the woman go all-out for the man'.<sup>5</sup> It proved too much for the Independent Theatre. *Mrs. Warren's Profession* dealt with prostitution and the traffic in women and was refused a licence by the Lord Chamberlain. The evidence was being manufactured with a vengeance; what still remained was to educate his audience, and that proved to be a much longer job. None of his earlier plays was a box-office success, yet somehow, as he afterwards said, his reputation grew with every failure.

It is not possible in a short study to deal fully with all the topics he has discussed in his plays and prefaces, to say nothing of his other writings, but an attempt will be made in a subsequent article to consider at least the more important of them. In the meantime, I must turn to another aspect of his many-sided activity.

<sup>4</sup> *The Sanity of Art.*

<sup>5</sup> Hesketh Pearson, *Bernard Shaw.*

We have seen what the discovery of Karl Marx had meant for him. About the same time—that is, in 1882—he came across a tract entitled *Why are the Many Poor?* which, he noticed, had been circulated by a group calling itself the Fabian Society. An address was printed on the pamphlet and Shaw went to one of their meetings. It was then a very small group of intellectuals, run chiefly by Hubert Bland and his wife, Edith Nesbit, who is now best remembered as a writer of charming stories for children. Shaw became a member of the Society, and soon drew in a young civil servant with whom he had become acquainted at a debating club which he attended. The name of the new recruit was Sidney Webb. He in turn enlisted two others, Sydney Olivier, one of his fellow clerks at the Colonial Office, and Olivier's friend, Graham Wallas. These four, together with Beatrice Potter when, at a later date, she became the wife of Sidney Webb, gradually transformed the original society into one of the most formidable and effective organs of socialist theory and propaganda in Europe.

The fact that Shaw, a professed Marxist, left the avowedly revolutionary Democratic Federation to join the Fabians, whose very name was a declaration of the waiting policy they advocated, is an indication of the caution which, in spite of his verbal violence, is a fundamental quality of his intellect. If socialism were introduced prematurely it would, he perceived, do more harm than good. The minds of men must be familiarized to the idea by a process of education which must necessarily be slow, and they must be convinced by solid argument that it was not only ideally desirable, but, when the time was ripe and the means of implementing it had been devised, a practicable instrument of reform which could be applied without risk of social dislocation.

His pet lesson was that a government must not take a penny from the private capitalist until it was ready to perform the social function he was performing, however anti-social his incentives might be.\*

For preparatory work of this sort, the Webbs were simply born. Sidney was the perfect civil servant, with all the mental qualities and all the indispensable limitations of a first-rate bureaucrat. He was a methodical and tireless worker, a patient collector of facts, with a card-index mind and an infallible memory. He had extraordinary powers of concentration; once started on a line of inquiry, he pursued it like a bloodhound, never deflected by a false scent and never at a loss. His mind was pedestrian, but for the purposes of the work he had chosen that was an advantage. He had no nerves, was always in control of himself, and was possessed by a spirit of disinterested public service. Beatrice Webb was his feminine counterpart. She came of Nonconformist and Radical stock, her forbears having risen from small shopkeeping to acquire a fortune in the Manchester cotton trade. Her father was a director of the Great Western Railway and had other large-scale railway and commercial interests. From him Beatrice inherited independent means, but quite early in life she, like many other enlightened members of the leisured class, began to have compunctions about the unequal distribution of wealth, which she felt to be morally indefensible. Before her marriage to Sidney

\* Hesketh Pearson, *Bernard Shaw*.

Webb she was already a socialist and had become known by her book on the Co-operative Movement. There is something engaging and appropriate in the fact that their idyll began when they were attending a Co-operative Congress in Glasgow, and that they spent their honeymoon looking up trade union records in Dublin.<sup>7</sup> After their marriage they agreed to live on her income and devote themselves to a systematic investigation of the political and economic structure of modern societies. It was rather a queer arrangement—using the advantages of capitalism in order to destroy it; but that does not seem to have occurred to them.

At first Beatrice Webb did not know what to make of her husband's incredible friend; he was like nothing on earth. She was accustomed to file people as she did facts, but Bernard Shaw would not go into any file she knew of. In the end she decided that he was a 'sprite'; that did classify him after a fashion, if only in a class by himself. But even a sprite, properly handled, can be taught to make himself useful. He can be made to run errands, raise storms and quell them, play tricks with wandering fires, throw his voice like a ventriloquist, guide castaways to safety and lure wicked usurpers to their doom. Here was Ariel ready made, and what was to hinder her Sidney from playing Prospero? Certainly not trifles like a pair of pince-nez and a little imperial beard. They proceeded to make use of their sprite. He showed an extraordinary docility—unlike H. G. Wells, with whom also they tried it on. He served on committees—and a very good committee-man he turned out to be—wrote pamphlets and manifestoes, gave evidence before Royal Commissions and addressed the economic section of the British Association, served as a vestry-man in the St. Pancras Ward—'me, the author of *Widowers' Houses!*' as he exclaims in wonder at himself. Above all, he preached the true doctrine in places of public entertainment, so that those who came to be amused often remained to pray. It was a thoroughly successful collaboration, and it endured as long as the Webbs lived.

Their joint achievement is already a matter of history. They turned the Fabian Society into an indispensable clearing-house of economic information. They coached Cabinet Ministers and industrialists and trade union leaders. They educated the Labour Party. They established the London School of Economics and laid a scientific foundation for socialism. They did more than anyone else to break up the old Poor Law. We may approve or deplore their activities, but take it all in all what they accomplished was nothing less than a bloodless revolution; and it was done so peaceably, with such a quiet efficiency, that people were scarcely aware of it even while it was going on under their noses. Bernard Shaw drew the enemy's fire while the Webbs burrowed under his positions and methodically placed their mines.

Shaw was loyal to all his friends, and all his friendships turned out fortunately. It was through the Webbs that he met the lady who shortly became his wife. She was Miss Charlotte Payne-Townshend, 'an Irish millionairess', as Shaw described her at the time; at all events, a lady of considerable wealth. They were attracted to each other from the first, but Shaw, already well in his forties and still with no regular income but his six pounds a week from the *Saturday Review*, was deterred by her wealth. It was largely left to her to

<sup>7</sup> Margaret Cole, *Beatrice Webb*.

overcome his hesitations—an unexpectedly personal application of his view of woman as the pursuer; and just then, as it happened, his prospects were brightened by a success with one of his plays, *The Devil's Disciple*, which brought him a useful profit. About the same time he suffered a general breakdown in health through overwork, and Miss Payne-Townshend took the situation into her own hands. She bought a ring and a licence and on 1st June 1898 they were married at the West Strand Registry Office, Shaw in an old jacket 'which had been reduced to rags by the crutches on which he hobbled about'.

It was a completely successful marriage, and although Shaw could not well become more indifferent to money than he always had been, it was certainly an advantage to be set free from task-work and in a position to write what he liked, whether it paid or not. No playwright who had to earn his living could afford the luxury of writing a play-sequence like *Back to Methuselah*, the very sight of which might well have given convulsions to any theatre manager who was seriously asked to produce it. No doubt there are those who think it a pity that he ever was free to write it; but the consideration of his work as artist and teacher must be left for a future article.

W. S. HANDLEY JONES

(To be continued)

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## ATHEISM PSYCHO-ANALYSED

ACCORDING to Freud (undoubtedly one of the greatest men of this century, and—in the importance of his influence—to be ranked with Einstein, Gandhi, and Lenin), 'the beginnings of religion, ethics, society, and art meet in the Oedipus complex'. He might have added atheism to this comprehensive list; for is not atheism simply the Oedipus complex carried to its most extreme degree? Parricide becomes deicide. The murderous attitude to one's father, which, we are told, is a normal feature of human nature, settles the atheist's attitude to his heavenly Father. But since he cannot murder Him, he does the next best thing and denies His existence.

Freud has dealt fairly fully with the subject of religion in his *New Introductory Lectures*.<sup>1</sup> It supplies, he tells us, (a) an account of creation, (b) a promise of protection, and (c) rigorous ethical commands. This strange trio is held together by the fact that all are connected with the father; thus psycho-analysis 'has traced the origin of religion to the helplessness of childhood, and its content to the persistence of the wishes and needs of childhood into maturity'. The God-Creator, who is openly called Father, really is the father clothed in the grandeur in which he once appeared to the small child. Freud, however, makes the rather damaging admission that he has limited himself to one single form of religion, that of the Western peoples. When one remembers other forms of religion which do not centre in or even include a supreme Father-God, the argument wears very thin. Unbelief, on the other hand, is almost entirely a Western phenomenon and there is therefore very much more warrant for finding the roots of unbelief in an anti-father complex.

It has long been maintained that many of our beliefs are emotionally and not rationally conditioned; and this of course applies to the sceptic as well as to the believer. Bernard Hart in his invaluable little book *The Psychology of Insanity* gives an interesting case of an atheist who was once a Sunday-school teacher. It was after an unhappy love affair, in which another Christian worker supplanted him, that he became an atheist. Later he discovered a number of well-reasoned arguments in support of his position, but as Hart maintains, there is no doubt that it had an emotional not a rational root.<sup>2</sup>

But the whole subject may be approached in a larger way by tracing in atheism a manifestation of the Oedipus complex which psycho-analysts regard as one of the mainsprings of human behaviour. It may be objected that this complex has two aspects; Oedipus, unknowingly, not only killed his father Laius, he married his mother Jocasta. If we can trace in atheism any symptoms corresponding to the latter part of the complex, the contention may be more worthy of attention. Now the remarkable thing is that various forms of atheism do show characteristics of this kind, in which a feminine (and usually maternal) element plays an important role. It is the purpose of the following to show that when men reject theism, there is often some kind of mother-fixation or some feminine element in the surrogate they adopt. The negative attitude to the father goes with a positive attitude to the mother.

It is rather significant that an estrangement or quarrel between the son and

<sup>1</sup> Lecture No. 35. See also *The Future of an Illusion*.

<sup>2</sup> See also 'The Psychology of Irreligion' by Bernard Phillips, *Hibbert Journal* (No. 181, January 1948.)

the father can be traced in a number of cases where there is a marked opposition to theism. One thinks of Samuel Butler and his hatred for his clergyman father, of Arnold Bennett, of Shelley. The atheist William Godwin is another instance, and here reference may be made to the biography by George Woodcock. It is shown that Godwin received an austere and strict upbringing. 'To me, who was perhaps never his favourite, his rebukes had a painful tone of ill humour and asperity.' This sense of injustice left a permanent trauma in Godwin's mind. At first it led him to emulate his father, and it will be remembered that he became a minister of religion. He stated about this time that granted the being of God, the truth of Christianity and of Calvinism followed. Woodcock's comment on this is of special interest for our present purpose. 'It is perhaps not an unjustifiable suggestion . . . that "God" should be regarded as being in Godwin's mind identical with his father. The statement then assumes a deep psychological significance.' It was not long, however, before he resigned from the ministry and entirely abandoned the Christian faith. 'He had proved himself as good as his father. Now, having assumed his father's authority, he was free of its domination, and could proceed to destroy the whole edifice of belief on which that authority had been based.'<sup>3</sup>

Godwin's attitude to his mother must also be noticed. This comes out in a letter home, written at the time of his mother's death: 'The knot is now severed, and I am, for the first time, at more than fifty years of age, alone. You shall now be my mother; you have in many instances been my protector and my guide, and I fondly trust will be more so, as I shall come to stand more in need of assistance.' Woodcock makes the relevant comment: 'The persistent mother-fixation revealed in these lines is a complementary psychological element to the rivalry and hatred for his father which we have already observed as an important motive in Godwin's literary activities.'<sup>4</sup>

In the case of Shelley, who was so deeply influenced by Godwin, we have once again a deep emotional cleavage between father and son. 'I never loved my father—it was not from hardness of heart, for I have loved and do love warmly.'<sup>5</sup> The bitter relationship between Shelley and his father is well known, and there is no doubt that his atheism was very closely linked with his attitude to his father; both were expressions of his resentment against all kinds of tyranny. This is one of the dominating themes of his poetical works. The word 'tyrant' occurs so frequently that it may be regarded as symptomatic of an obsession. The theme of *The Cenci* is the tyrannical father, just as the fall of the tyrant Jupiter is celebrated in *Prometheus Unbound*.

Although Shelley always described himself as an atheist, the term was not strictly correct. It represented his revulsion from orthodox Christianity rather than an acceptance of a blank materialism. In a letter to Hogg<sup>6</sup> he declares that it is impossible not to believe in 'the soul of the universe, the intelligent and necessarily beneficent, actuating principle'; the leaf of a tree, the meanest insect, are in themselves arguments 'that some vast intellect animates infinity'. Religion had been kicked out of the front door, but came floating back through the upstairs window. This spirit of the universe, or spirit of Intellectual Beauty, is usually spoken of in feminine terms—and not only feminine

<sup>3</sup> G. Woodcock, *William Godwin*.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 198.

<sup>5</sup> Letter of 16th January 1812.

<sup>6</sup> 3rd January 1811.



but maternal terms. There was in his case no mother-fixation of a literal kind, but psychology has made us familiar with the idea of transference and projection. And just as Shelley's attitude to his father had been transferred to God, so a kind of mother-fixation manifested itself in his attitude to the spirit of nature. Thus in *Queen Mab* the God of human error and the mother of the world appear in adjacent lines:

*Spirit of Nature! all-sufficing Power!  
Necessity! thou mother of the world!  
Unlike the God of human error, thou  
Requir'st no prayers or praises.*

Once again we are not far from the Oedipus associations; Shelley of course produced a work on the Oedipus legend, the worthless burlesque *Oedipus Tyrannus*.

His first good poem, *Alastor*, begins with a reference to 'our great Mother' in its second line and contains later the invocation:

*Mother of this unfathomable world!  
Favour my solemn song, for I have loved  
Thee ever, and thee only. . . .  
In lone and silent hours,  
When night makes a weird sound of its own stillness . . .  
Have I mixed awful talk and asking looks  
With my most innocent love, until strange tears  
Uniting with those breathless kisses, made  
Such magic as compels the charmed night  
To render up thy charge.*

Another form of mental conflict leading to atheism arises from the belief that religion robs us of the enjoyment of this world. God and the earth are regarded as alternatives between which we must choose. How striking it is in this connexion to remember that for thousands of years, the earth has been called Mother Earth. We are thus well within the framework of the Oedipus complex when we say that one form of unbelief tries to destroy the divine Father, God, in order to enjoy Mother Earth. Francis Thompson in his *Hound of Heaven* gives a good account of this conflict; he, however, finally reaches the Christian solution—he finds that by yielding to the pursuit of God all the glories of God's creation are his, and at the end God says to him:

*All which I took from thee I did but take,  
Not for thy harms,  
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.  
All which thy child's mistake  
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:  
Rise, clasp My hand, and come!*

But although the poem reaches this fine conclusion, it nevertheless bears witness to the view that there is a cleavage and rivalry between God and the Earth, and it expresses the fear, 'Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside'.

Now it is to be noticed that Thompson speaks of Nature as feminine even though he comes to see that she is an unsatisfying stepdame:

*Nature, poor stepdame, cannot slake my drouth;  
 Let her, if she would owe me,  
 Drop yon blue bosom-veil of sky, and show me  
 The breasts o' her tenderness:  
 Never did any milk of hers once bless  
 My thirsting mouth.*

The psycho-analysts who are so skilful in finding the Oedipus motive in so many places, would no doubt fasten upon the reference to

*Wantoning  
 With our Lady-Mother's vagrant tresses.*

(A reference of Freud to Mother Earth may be mentioned; in his *Totem and Taboo* (253) he remarks that with the introduction of agriculture the importance of the son in the patriarchal family increased. In agriculture he found an outlet for his Oedipal libido which 'found symbolic satisfaction in labouring over mother earth'. In this surprising passage we have Freud's own authority for connecting Mother Earth with the complex in question.)

A passage of Wordsworth's famous *Ode on Intimations of Immortality* may be recalled at this point, as it illustrates a similar kind of conflict to that we have traced in Thompson. Man, he says, is tempted to forget his divine origin because of the counter-attractions of Mother Earth. She does all she can to make him 'forget the glories he hath known, and that imperial palace whence he came'.

*Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own;  
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,  
 And even with something of a mother's mind, etc.*

St. Paul, as he looked at the pagan world around him in Asia Minor, Greece, and elsewhere, concluded that men 'did not choose to retain God in their knowledge'. When we ask what substitute they found it is immensely interesting to notice that they were not satisfied with a blank atheism, but worshipped Cybele, the Great Mother! The Mother-goddess, often a personification of the reproductive forces of Nature, was very familiar in the ancient world.

It is fascinating to trace the development of the rather grotesque forms of the eastern Mother-goddess into Aphrodite of the Greeks and the Roman Venus. But this last point may serve to connect with what is now to be said concerning Lucretius. He is one of the most famous of the world's atheists. And here again how remarkable to find that this great poet, who had no room for belief in a supreme Father-God, begins his poem with a sublime invocation of Venus Genetrix!

*Aeneadum genetrix hominum divomque voluptas, alma Venus . . .*

Mother of Aeneas and his race, darling of men and gods, nurturing Venus, who beneath the smooth-moving heavenly signs fillest with thyself the sea full-laden with ships, the earth with her kindly fruits, since through thee every generation of living things is conceived and rising up looks on the light of the sun . . .

Further, if we study Lucretius's statements concerning religion and the terror it produces, we find something else making definite connexion with our

subject. A passage in Book V is held by some authorities to reveal infantile terror in relation to the image of God:<sup>7</sup>

For when we look upward to the celestial regions of the great firmament, to the ether studded with glittering stars, when we think of the ways of sun and moon, into our hearts already crushed with other woes a new anxious care awakening begins to lift up its head, whether by any chance we have to do with some immeasurable power of the gods, able to make the bright stars revolve with their different movements.<sup>8</sup>

It should be possible to show that in some great movement with an atheistic tendency (as well as in the case of individuals) a feminine or maternal element emerges as a centre of interest and devotion. Buddhism is not strictly atheistic, but it believes that the gods as much as men are imprisoned in the great system of Karma and can therefore give no help to men. Prayer to the gods consequently has no place in true Buddhism. For all practical purposes this is equivalent to atheism; and in any case there is no supreme Creator in its thought. Is it possible in any way to connect Buddhism with a feminine or maternal element similar to those which have appeared in other forms of the negation of God?

It would be tempting to find the Mother to which the Buddhist turns in Kwannon or Kwanyin, so familiar in Mahayana Buddhism; temples in honour of the Goddess of mercy are familiar in the Far East with their images of the Madonna type. But I think we can find a better answer than this, for after all the Goddess of mercy is a later development which did not figure in the original teaching of the Buddha.

Now it is important to notice that psycho-analysis speaks of a death-instinct, which is connected with a Nirvana-principle. The whole subject is linked with the mother-complex. The prototype of the Nirvana-principle is 'the blissful isolation of the intra-uterine existence'.<sup>9</sup> One movement of the human soul is in the direction of a return to the pre-natal state with its avoidance of action and responsibility, an escape from life. It will be seen that Buddhism with its goal of Nirvana corresponds with this tendency to inertia and death.

Freud maintains in his book *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* that 'the ruling tendency of psychic life, perhaps of nerve life altogether, is the struggle for reduction, keeping at a constant level, or removal of the inner stimulus tension (the Nirvana-principle, as Barbara Low terms it)'. An intriguing passage from the *New Introductory Lectures* may also be quoted:

If it is true that once—in an inconceivably remote past, and in an unimaginable way—life arose out of inanimate matter, then, in accordance with our hypothesis, an instinct must at that time have come into being, whose aim it was to abolish life once more and to re-establish the inorganic state of things. If in this instinct we recognize the impulse to self-destruction of our hypothesis, then we can regard that impulse as the manifestation of a death instinct, which can never be absent in any

<sup>7</sup> See Maud Bodkin's excellent work, *Archetypal Patterns in Poetry*, to which I am indebted for one or two points.

<sup>8</sup> W. H. D. Rouse's translation; Loeb Library. A further striking illustration is provided by Swinburne's *Songs before Sunrise*, written in his fiercely atheistic period. 'Hertha', which he considered the best of his shorter poems, describes the slaying of God. In His place we have the spirit of Nature, Hertha (the Teutonic Goddess of earth) who is more than once invoked as 'Mother'. The mother-motive may be traced in a dozen poems of the same collection; see e.g. 'Mater Triumphalis'.

<sup>9</sup> Freud's *Introductory Lectures*, p. 348.

vital process. . . . The erotic instincts . . . are always trying to collect living substance together into ever larger unities, and the death instincts . . . act against that tendency, and try to bring living matter back into an inorganic condition.<sup>10</sup>

McDougall describes Freud's death instinct as 'the most bizarre monster of all his gallery of monsters'.<sup>11</sup> Yet there is much to be said in support of this Freudian postulate—probably much more than in support of the Oedipus complex, concerning which a number of Freud's followers have become doubtful, as McDougall shows.

A well-known psychological condition is best explained as an unconscious desire to return to pre-natal conditions. This is not, I think, related by psycho-analysts to the Oedipus complex, but it is a form of mother-fixation and thus claims a place in this survey. Leslie D. Weatherhead in his *Psychology and Life* tells of a young man who once consulted him; he complained that he was afraid of life, he wanted to shrink into himself and to avoid the hard struggle of the world outside. Dr. Weatherhead then finished the patient's report for him, and to his astonishment told him (quite correctly): 'You are still passionately fond of your mother. You sleep with your knees up to your chin. You love rocking-chairs and you are fond of jazz.' All these are related in some way to the conditions of pre-natal life, its security, its comfort, its rhythmic movements.

Is not the desire of the Buddhist to attain to Nirvana (like the Hindu's desire to lose himself in Brahma) an expression of this infantile regression? Let us place side by side a description of the life of inertia 'in utero' and a passage of an Indian scripture. First, here is Dr. Bousfield's description of the embryo: 'It has to make no struggle for existence, it has to deal with nothing real, save perhaps that its voluntary movements are limited, and this perhaps is bad for its education, since at that period of its life it learns that it can be most comfortable by making least effort.'<sup>12</sup>

Who can fail to see that these are the kind of conditions sought in Nirvana and in Yoga? 'A devotee should constantly devote his self to abstraction, remaining in a secret place, alone, with his mind and self restrained, without expectations and without belongings. . . . Abandoning without exception all desires . . . one should by slow steps become quiescent, with a firm resolve coupled with courage; and fixing the mind upon the self, should think of nothing.' (Though these words from the Gita belong to Hinduism, they may be applied to Buddhism with little alteration, since Yoga and the Buddhist Samadhi are closely related.) It is unnecessary to labour the point as psycho-analysts themselves use the term Nirvana-principle. The Buddhist goal is to avoid being born into the world again.

Strangely enough, or perhaps in confirmation of the foregoing, the death-instinct appears in Shelley, again in connexion with references to the mother. In Act 3 of *Prometheus Unbound* death is

the last embrace of her  
Who takes the life she gave, even as a mother  
Folding her child, says, 'Leave me not again'.

<sup>10</sup> p. 138.

<sup>11</sup> *Psycho-analysis and Social Psychology*, p. 64.

<sup>12</sup> E. G. P. Bousfield, *The Omnipotent Self*, p. 53.

Again in *The Cenci*,

Come, obscure Death,  
And wind me in thine all-embracing arms!  
Like a fond mother hide me in thy bosom,  
And rock me to the sleep from which none wake!<sup>13</sup>

Shelley had at times a morbid concern with this theme, and three of his poems have *Death* as their title.

This preoccupation with death is perhaps symptomatic of the pessimism which often accompanies the atheistic position. The kind of neurotic mentioned above may seek comfort and security, but he does not find it for long; instead he finds misery and depression. Here too the words of Jesus are relevant—by saving life we lose it, by losing it we find it. In a similar way the atheist may for a time find a sense of relief as he slips back into a self-enclosed universe with no God to trouble him; but soon a different frame of mind supervenes. And so it is no accident that pessimism is often a characteristic of unbelief.

Anatole France thus speaks of 'this agony called life'. He maintained that he had not been happy for a single hour, 'not for a single moment have I felt happy; at least, not since I was a child'. 'The public Venus at least affords us a temporary anodyne for our cares.' On the return of Spring—'How foolish of Nature . . . to perpetuate on the old earth's crust this sorry layer of mildew we dignify with the name of Life!'<sup>14</sup> One thinks too of the pessimism which pervades the novels of Hardy; a clear trace of the death-instinct may be observed particularly in *Jude the Obscure*. That atheism is an unhealthy retreat from reality may be seen by this morbid pessimism which often accompanies it. Pain, whether physical or mental, is nature's warning that something is wrong, some law of reality is being broken. If a man puts his hand in the fire, he feels pain because he is acting in a way that is contrary to the nature of things. A similar law applies to mental pain. That helps to explain why Schopenhauer was so miserable, and why Charles Wesley and Francis of Assisi were riotously happy.

There is no doubt that some men have reluctantly rejected Christianity (as it has been presented to them) because their intellectual honesty made faith very difficult. T. H. Huxley once said he would have given his right hand to share in the help and inspiration of the Christian faith. But in many cases other forces are unconsciously at work.

The modern humanistic scientific atheist may seem to be at the opposite pole from the Oriental systems mentioned above; but even in his case, one can trace a desire to avoid anything resembling a transcendent deity and an insistence that Nature is a self-enclosed system of which man forms a part. Some modern writers' references to theism have a strong emotional colouring. They are capable of dispassionate discussion of other subjects, but one cannot avoid the impression that on this topic deeper elements than logic are controlling the argument. Theism is dismissed not because it is untrue but because it is intolerable. We cannot have this transcendent God standing over us and giving us orders. But an impersonal order of which we ourselves form a part

<sup>13</sup> See also *Stanzas written in Dejection, near Naples*.

<sup>14</sup> See N. Ségur, *Conversations with Anatole France*.



is a different matter. The idea of God is not so much irrational as insufferable. Aldous Huxley in his *Ends and Means* has the candour to admit that he and some of his generation had other than intellectual reasons for the philosophy of life they adopted.

I had motives for not wanting the world to have a meaning, consequently assumed that it had none and was able without any difficulty to find satisfying reasons for this assumption. . . . The philosopher who finds no meaning in the world is not concerned exclusively with a problem in pure metaphysics; he is also concerned to prove there is no valid reason why he personally should not do as he wants, or why his friends should not seize political power and govern in the way they find most advantageous to themselves. . . . For myself, as no doubt for most of my contemporaries, the philosophy of meaninglessness was essentially an instrument of liberation. The liberation we desired was simultaneously liberation from a certain political and economic system and liberation from a certain system of morality. We objected to the morality because it interfered with our sexual freedom; we objected to the political and economic system because it was unjust.

There is indeed something unpalatable in the fact that life has a meaning and a purpose. Theism has its disquieting corollaries. But after all, the true development of personality depends on its courage to face the reality-principle and to rise above the delusions of infancy. Christianity calls upon men to leave the imagined safety of 'blissful isolation' and to face facts, to stand upon their feet and to encounter God—to forsake the warm recesses of the pleasure-principle, which are morbid and unnatural however comforting they may be, and to meet One whose authority and love are alike beyond our powers of escape.

It is 'just when we are safest', as Browning puts it, that those gleams and messages from a higher realm disturb our security. After all, the father of Oedipus was not a phantom but a real man. We cannot get rid of God either by killing Him or denying His existence.

At the same time Christians can learn something about the presentation of their message from the phenomena we have been discussing. If God had been presented as immanent Spirit as well as transcendent Creator, men of Shelley's stamp might have revised their attitude. Perhaps we have given a distorted representation of God, over-emphasizing some aspects to the neglect of others.<sup>15</sup> If God is thought of in too 'masculine' a way, as the law-giver, the centre of authority, the human spirit almost instinctively turns to something more feminine and tender. According to the Bible there is a maternal element in God Himself. 'As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.' God is not standing over against us as some entirely external lawgiver. He is also the source of our being, and the spirit of man is His candle. Indwelt by the Spirit, man can safely follow the impulses of his own heart. One of St. Paul's great themes is the contrast between the exacting demands of the law and the gift of God's grace through Christ. The transition from Romans 7, with its legal religion, to Romans 8, with its life in the Spirit, is not entirely unrelated to our subject.

T. FRANCIS GLASSON

<sup>15</sup> Miss Bodkin (op. cit.) has a sympathetic treatment of this subject; and she shows how in Dante we have the supreme presentation in poetry of God fulfilling the needs of man's nature.

## THE ORIGIN OF THE METHODIST QUARTERLY MEETING

METHODISM has been celebrating the bicentenary of one of its most characteristic and important institutions, the Circuit Quarterly Meeting. For two hundred years Quarterly Meetings have served to broaden the vision of local Methodist Societies by reminding them of their privileges and responsibilities as members of a widespread Christian community. The Quarterly Meeting has enabled the Methodist Church to become a compact ecclesiastical organization, a 'Connexion', rather than a number of loosely associated congregations.

Strangely enough, this institution has been taken very much for granted, and there has been little inquiry into its origins—or at any rate little conclusive inquiry.<sup>1</sup> For like many distinctive features of Methodism the Quarterly Meeting seems to have arisen almost casually. It was the result of several converging influences, although the crystallizing of the idea was due mainly to one man, John Bennet, whose inspiration came largely from the Society of Friends.

The holding of meetings *quarterly* was not original, of course, not even with the Quakers. The Anglican Church had its quarterly Ember Weeks. The legal quarter-days were even more an integral part of British life then than now. Judges rode their circuits and justices held their Quarter-sessions long before Methodist preachers followed in their steps. A meeting primarily for business at least four times a year would seem quite natural in trying to co-ordinate a scattered religious organization. Monthly business meetings would become tedious, although the Friends and the Moravians held such meetings, and for a time it seemed that the Methodists might follow their example. Annual meetings, on the other hand, would be conducive to slackness. The Religious Societies, upon which the Methodist Societies were largely modelled, while meeting weekly for fellowship and electing their two Stewards annually, also arranged for a quarterly business meeting, the fourteenth rule of Dr. Woodward's own society at Poplar being:

That these orders shall be read over at least four times in the year, by one of the stewards; and that with such deliberation that each member may have time to examine himself by them, or to speak his mind in anything relating to them.<sup>2</sup>

The Religious Societies of London also joined together as a group once a quarter, for worship if not for business, one such gathering providing the opportunity for Dr. William Berriman to issue a warning about 'some persons among us, who have discover'd a great fervour of zeal, but not guided with that prudence and discretion one would wish'—the Methodists apparently being intended.<sup>3</sup>

Quarterly oversight of members of the Methodist Societies was established

<sup>1</sup> The pioneer attempt was that of W. W. Stamp, in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* for 1843, pp. 376–82.

<sup>2</sup> J. Simon: *John Wesley and the Religious Societies*, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> 'A Sermon Preach'd to the Religious Societies in and about London, at their Quarterly Meeting in the Parish Church of St. Mary Le Bow, on Wednesday, March the 21st, 1738–9.'



from the very early days. In February 1741 John Wesley met the Bristol Methodists to issue tickets of membership to those 'who were sufficiently recommended', and by the following year the quarterly renewal of these tickets was an established procedure, later described by Wesley thus:

As the Society increased, I found it required still greater care to separate the precious from the vile. In order to do this, I determined, at least once in three months, to talk with every member myself. . . . To each of those whose seriousness and good conversation I found no reason to doubt I gave a testimony under my own hand, by writing their name on a ticket prepared for that purpose. . . . Any disorderly member . . . has no new ticket at the quarterly visitation.<sup>4</sup>

According to a minute of the 1746 Conference any new members should be received publicly at the general lovefeast, also held quarterly, and three months was the normal period of probation.<sup>5</sup>

The Methodist Conference itself had begun in 1744 as a quarterly meeting, the members arranging to meet again 'if God permits, Nov. 1st at Newcastle, Feb. 1st at Bristol, May 1st London'. Actually it was not until 1st August 1745 that the next Conference assembled, and although proposing to meet again 'in January next, if God permit' it was delayed until May, when the members were content to establish it as an annual conference by arranging to reassemble 'at London, next summer, if God permit'.<sup>6</sup> The Conference probably acted partly under the influence of the Welsh Methodist Associations which had been started a year or two earlier. Like the Friends, the Welsh Methodists gathered together both monthly, quarterly, and annually, the regular Quarterly Associations beginning at Watford on 6th January 1743. This meeting, like those which followed, had features in common both with the Conferences and the Quarterly Meetings of Wesleyan Methodism. That there was some reciprocal influence is practically certain, though to gauge its extent is almost impossible.<sup>7</sup> Even earlier, however, at least as early as 1739, the seeds of both types of meeting had been sown in Wesley's mind, when with two other clergymen he devised a plan for consolidating the efforts both of the scattered Oxford Methodists and of laymen like John Cennick. It was then agreed:

1. To meet yearly at London, if God permit, on the Eve of Ascension-Day.
2. To fix then the business to be done the ensuing year: where, when, and by whom?
3. To meet quarterly there, as many as can; viz. on the second Tuesday in July, October, and January.
4. To send a monthly account to one another, of what God hath done in each of our stations.<sup>8</sup>

These early gropings after a method of co-ordinating Methodist evangelism were not followed up immediately, but they were not forgotten. The first

<sup>4</sup> *Wesley's Works*, 4th edn., VIII.256-7; cf. *Wesley's Journal*, Standard Edn., II.429, and *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society*, V.36.

<sup>5</sup> *Publications of the W.H.S.*, I.38, 52, 53; *Wesley's Works*, VIII.258.

<sup>6</sup> *W.H.S. Publications*, I.18, 29, 39. The first regulations for stationing preachers were also on a quarterly basis, in answer to the question of the 1746 Conference, 'How are these places to be supplied for this Quarter?' op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>7</sup> See M. H. Jones: *The Trevecka Letters*, pp. 257-306, especially 265, 286-9, 291, 299; cf. Tyerman's *Whitefield*, II.57-8, etc.

<sup>8</sup> Whitehead's *Wesley*, II.125-6.

Methodist Conference, for instance, took up the last suggestion, by agreeing that Wesley should correspond 'once a month with each Assistant and with some other person (at least) in each Society'.<sup>9</sup> As the work spread a full Conference of all the workers, even annually, became impracticable, although all those 'who were or might have been present' were given copies of the minutes and instructed to read them 'to the Stewards and Leaders of Bands'.<sup>10</sup> On the last day of the 1748 Conference, 6th June, the problem was evidently discussed at some length. The preachers in 'the distant Societies' were instructed to send details of conversions and deaths to Wesley, and 'assisted by the Stewards' to draw up each Easter a list of members for transmission to the Conference.<sup>11</sup> Even closer co-operation was desired, however:

Q[uestion] 8: Would it not be of use if all the Societies were more firmly and closely united together?

A[nswer]: Without doubt it would be much to the glory of God, to the ease of the Minister, and to the benefit of the Societies themselves both in things spiritual and temporal.<sup>12</sup>

John Bennet had joined in these closing discussions of the Conference, probably with an idea already half-formed in his mind as to how the admitted deficiency might be remedied.<sup>13</sup> He and William Darney would talk the question over as they rode back to their respective 'Rounds'. To them, more particularly to Bennet, was due the speedy establishment of Quarterly Meetings in the north, an example soon to be followed in other parts of the country. The arrangements for the closer co-ordination of their Societies were apparently well in hand a month or so after the Conference. Bennet's journal for 27th July was interrupted in order to place on record the planning of the first Methodist Quarterly Meetings, the opportunity of being first in the field being generously accorded to Darney's Societies:

The 1st. Quarterly Meeting in Lancashire  
is held at Major Marshalls at Todmorden  
Edge on Tuesday the 18th. of Oct. 1748  
To meet at a 11 a Clock in ye. Forenoon.

The 1st Quarterly Meeting for Cheshire is held at Robt. Swindels in Woodley on Thursday ye. 20th of Oct. 11 a Clock.<sup>14</sup>

In the interval Bennet continued to tour among the Societies, accompanied on occasion both by Wesley and by the Rev. William Grimshaw of Haworth. It was Grimshaw who took charge of the first Quarterly Meeting, and in his hand the first circuit accounts of Methodism were kept. On the fly-leaf of this vellum-bound volume (still preserved in the strong-room of the Temple Street Church, Keighley) he inscribed the following note:

<sup>9</sup> *W.H.S. Publications*, I.17.

<sup>10</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 38 (1746).

<sup>11</sup> *op. cit.*, pp. 58-9. This is, of course, the origin of the present March review of membership.

<sup>12</sup> *op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>13</sup> Bennet had already been present at the first Methodist Conference, in 1744, and also at that of 1747. For our knowledge of these early Conferences we are greatly indebted to the copies of their minutes which he preserved, and which have been published by the Wesley Historical Society.

<sup>14</sup> Bennet's manuscript journal is preserved at the Methodist Book Room, where it has kindly been made available.

Oct. 18th. 1748.

At a Meeting then held at Major Marshall's at Todmorden Edge in the Parish of Rochdale and County of Lancaster of the Leaders of several Classes in several Religious Societies (to wit) Rosindale—Rough Lee—Hepponstal—Todmorden, etc., The following Persons were chosen Stewards of the s<sup>d</sup> Societies, and intrusted to transact the temporal Affairs:

James Greenwood.  
John Parker.  
John Madin.  
James Dyson.

Memorandum. It was then agreed That if there be any just Cause to Exchange any of the above Stewards, It shall be done at the next Quarterly Meeting held for the s<sup>d</sup> Societies by the Approbation of the Leaders then present.

Note. If any Dispute arise touching the choosing of a Steward, the greater Number of Voices shall have the Choice, to elect a fresh Steward. This shall be mentioned to our Minister Mr. John Wesley or his Successor, who shall end any Dispute of this kind.<sup>15</sup>

John Bennet's own journal record of these first two Quarterly Meetings was very brief:

18. Was our Quarterly Meeting at Todmorden Edge. We was much blessed. The Stewards then chosen to transact the Temporal Affairs, were

Jams. Greenwood  
John Maden  
Jams. Dyson  
John Parker . . .

20th. I went to Woodley to the Quarterly Meet<sup>g</sup>. The Stewards then chosen were

Jams. Wood  
Jams. Fogg  
Jos. Gee.  
Abr. Mathews.

In a letter to John Wesley, however, he was much more explicit:

Chinley Oct. 22d, 1748.

Sir,

. . . On Tuesday the 18th of this Inst. was a Meeting (at Todmorden Edge) of the Leaders in the several Societies belonging to Wm. Darney &c. Four Stewards were appointed to inspect into, and regulate the temporal Affairs of the Societies. Every Ldr brought his Class Paper and shewed wt. Money he had recd. yt. Quarter, which was fairly entered in a Book for yt. Purpose. The several Bills of Charges were brought in at the same, and after they were thoroughly examined were all discharged. But Alas! The People are exceeding Poor, and will not be able to maintain the Preachers & Wm Darney's Family.—The Overplus after the Bills were discharged was only 9s. 2d.

The No. of the Brethren at ye. Meeting as appeared by the Books wherein the Names are entered was (358). Bror. Darney is gone for New Castle. I hope his going thither may be well.

<sup>15</sup> W.H.S. *Proceedings*, XXIII.112; cf. facsimile, op. cit., X.141. A similar entry to that of the first paragraph is to be found in the Todmorden Society Book. See J. W. Laycock: *Methodist Heroes in the Great Haworth Round*, p. 67. Elsewhere 'Madin' is often given as 'Maden', which became the usual spelling.

On Thursday the 20th of this Inst. was our Quarterly Meeting held at Woodley of the Ldrs in Derbyshire, Cheshire, and part of Lancashire. The same Method was used here as above. The Lord did bless our Meeting in a very extraordinary Manner. After Business was ended we sang a Hymn, several of the Brethren pray'd, and I gave a short Exhortation. Oh! dear Sr, Let this Method be used in other Places. Once a Year we propose to meet all the Ldrs, and at the other Quarterly Meeting the Stewards in each respective Society need only be present with the particular Accts.—This Way will not be very expensive.—I have made a small Book which shall be kept in the Box with the Accts. wherein an exact Acct. of the Marriages, Deaths, Backsliders, &c shall be Noted down that I may be able to give you an Acct. thereof each Quarter. Our No. of Brethren at Woodley Meeting was (527) . . .<sup>16</sup>

Although Wesley's answer to Bennet's appeal, 'Let this Method be used in other Places', has been lost—it was written on 29th October according to the endorsement—Wesley certainly seems to have encouraged Bennet in the new venture. On 25th November he wrote:

You see how needful it is for you to step over into Yorkshire at least once in a quarter. It would be well if you could reach Lincolnshire too, though but for one week.<sup>17</sup>

Bennet was present at the next Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting (again held at Todmorden Edge) and probably himself took the chair, as also at the Woodley Quarterly Meeting two days later. Once more they were made the occasions of preaching as well as of business, some of the members even staying overnight at Todmorden Edge and holding a service early the next morning. The following Quarterly Meeting at Todmorden Edge, 18th April 1749, held a kind of Camp Meeting:

The Business of the Day was over in good Time. There was several Exhorters then present, Wm. Darney, P. Greenwd, B. Spencer, Mr. Grimshaw, who preached from Luke 10<sup>42</sup>. B. Spencer Exhorted, and afterwards Mr. Grimshaw. . . .<sup>18</sup>

At Woodley two days later, said Bennet,

there was no Exhorter present but myself; however we went thro the Business of the Day well. There was great Unity and Peace. Some New Members were added, and some that were negligent were wrote unto.

Already other groups of Societies were being urged to start Quarterly Meetings. That at Todmorden Edge only covered the handful of Darney's Societies in West Yorkshire and East Lancashire—a very small section of the huge Yorkshire Round. Soon Quarterly Meetings were organized at other centres in the Round. Bennet's journal records:

(1st May) I came to Leeds & it was their Quarterly Meeting. The Business of the Day was not so transacted as I could have wished. . . .

(4th May) Was our Quarterly Meeting at Birstal.

<sup>16</sup> Colman Collection, at Methodist Book Room, item 147. Actually the letter was sent to 'J. W.—' care of 'William Briggs at the Custom-house, London'. Cf. *Methodist Recorder*, Winter Number, 1902, pp. 29–30.

<sup>17</sup> *Wesley's Letters*, II.158; cf. p. 171 (9th January 1749).

<sup>18</sup> Bennet's journal.

That Bennet's inspiration in thus forming and assisting at the formation of Quarterly Meetings came largely from the Friends is fairly certain. Like the Friends, he had already conducted many Monthly Meetings among his Societies, although this practice was paralleled also by the Welsh Monthly Associations, and by the Monthly Meetings held in Lancashire and Yorkshire at this time by the Moravians under Benjamin Ingham.<sup>19</sup> He had certainly gone to the Quaker meeting-place at Low Leighton as early as 1742 in order to hear a well-known Quaker minister, Benjamin Holmes—though only because the snow prevented his going to hear Ingham.<sup>20</sup> In 1747 he had come into close contact with Friends at Kendal, though he was not favourably impressed with their schoolmaster.<sup>21</sup> He knew the Kershaws of Skircoat Green, a Quaker family converted to Methodism.<sup>22</sup> Soon after his Quarterly Meeting venture Bennet seems to have delved more deeply into Quaker lore, in order that he might be better able to advise Wesley about the strong points of Quaker organization. One of the documents which he came across he considered important enough to be transcribed in full into the letter-book which he reserved for special items. It was the four folio pages of the Friends' *Epistle from the Yearly Meeting for 1747*.<sup>23</sup> Many similarities to Methodist organization can be traced in this *Epistle*, itself an instrument of connexional policy to be paralleled many years later by the *Annual Address* of the Methodist Conference. One of the paragraphs which would undoubtedly strike Bennet's eye was that with the marginal caption, 'A Prudent Behaviour in Managing the Affairs of the Church recommended':

And, Dear Friends, We find it our Concern at this Time to remind You, that as the Original Purpose and Design of these our *Annual Assemblies*, as also of our *Quarterly* and *Monthly Meetings*, was the Exercise of a Prudent and Christian Care

<sup>19</sup> The Friends' Monthly Meeting was a gathering of representatives from a number of societies, while their Quarterly Meeting was composed of a group of Monthly Meetings. cf. R. M. Jones: *Later Periods of Quakerism*, Vol. I, pp. 110–11.

For the Monthly Associations of the Welsh Methodists see M. H. Jones's *Trevecka Letters*, pp. 266–9, 286–9.

The 'Anglican-Moravian-Methodist Religious Society' formed at Fetter Lane in 1738 admitted members once a month. (D. Benham: *Memoirs of James Hutton*, p. 31; W. G. Addison: *Renewed Church of the United Brethren*, p. 84.) As a Moravian Benjamin Ingham in 1741 had about sixty Societies in Yorkshire and 'usually preached through them once a month, kept a general meeting once a month, to which some resorted from every place'. This monthly General Meeting was held at Joseph Fearnley's near Great Gomersal until the consecration of the Hall at Pudsey in 1748 offered him a new centre. It seems that only in later years, after he had left the Moravians and set up an independent denomination, did he hold conferences and quarterly meetings, perhaps under Methodist influence. See the manuscript account of his work compiled by William Batty from Ingham's diary, in the Rylands Library, Manchester, Eng. MSS. 1062.

Monthly Meetings are very often mentioned in Bennet's journal. On 2nd May 1743 he says: 'We had a Monthly Meeting, seemed very free, and John Wood and Jos. Lingard were chosen as Stewards over the Men for the year following, Jane Bagshaw and Mary Dayne over the Women, and agreed that in our Private Meetings the Scriptures should be read.' On 1st July he records: 'Monthly Meeting at Milntown and had 5 added to the Society; we were happy together.' On 7th July 1744 he says: 'I set out for Woodley in Cheshire it being the Monthly Meeting held there the first Saturday in each Month.' Unlike the other Monthly Meetings mentioned above, however, all those held by Bennet seem to have been for one Society only, and not for a group of Societies.

<sup>20</sup> Bennet's journal, 7th November 1742.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, 17–19th April 1747.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, 25th December 1747. cf. Wesley's *Journal*, III. 234, 293. William Darney also seems to have been familiar with the Friends, and in seeking a publisher in 1751 for his hymns turned to a Quaker printer, James Lister of Leeds.

<sup>23</sup> Bennet's letter-book, at the Methodist Book Room. cf. the Friends' *Yearly-Epistle*, 1747, British Museum, fol. 4151.h.9.



### 34 ORIGIN OF THE METHODIST QUARTERLY MEETING

and Oversight of the *Churches* in general, that peace and good order might be maintain'd, and that all of Us might adorn our Profession of Godliness with good Works, it behoveth us, in all such our Assemblies, to have our Minds seasoned with a Sense of the Weight of the Work we are engaged in, and to exert Our Selves with an holy Zeal for the Cause of God, and the Promotion of his Truth.

'A Prudent and Christian Care and Oversight of the Churches in general' was exactly what the preceding Methodist Conference had been pleading for, and the Friends' method of achieving this end had certainly much to commend it. Bennet apparently copied out the *Epistle* in January 1749, about the time of the second Quarterly Meetings at Todmorden Edge and Woodley.<sup>24</sup> When the following Quarterly Meeting at Woodley presented the need both for exercising discipline over laggard members and for canvassing help toward the expenses of a Methodist lawsuit against rioters,<sup>25</sup> even the phraseology of the *Epistle* was echoed. The *Epistle* had urged backsliders:

We also think it proper to renew our former Exhortations and again to excite You to a diligent Attending of Meetings for Divine Worship, . . . and that You be carefull to observe the Hour appointed for meeting.

Schooled by Bennet, the Woodley Quarterly Meeting wrote to erring Methodists:

We think it proper to exhort You to be more carefull for the time to come in observing the Hour appointed for Meeting.

The *Epistle* was 'Signed in and on Behalf of the Yearly-Meeting, By Henry Bradford, Clerk to the Meeting this Year'. The Woodley letter of appeal for financial help was also 'Signed in, and on ye Behalf of the Quartly. Meeting, J. Bennet'. In describing in his journal how the lawsuit was defeated by perjury, Bennet again fell into Quaker phraseology:

By this very Action I saw clearly we were call'd to suffer for the Truth, and not to make use of Carnal Weapons in defence of our Kingdom.<sup>26</sup>

There followed for Bennet an eventful summer. In July further Quarterly Meetings were held at Todmorden Edge, where Grimshaw preached in the open air, and at Woodley, when Bennet said 'we had a very unanimous meeting; everything seemed to be done decently and in order'. After a few weeks' illness Bennet was on the move again, commencing pioneer Methodist Societies near Congleton and at Chester, and travelling on to Epworth. Here he found John Wesley and Grace Murray on their way north. He 'had some close conversation with J. Wy', and asked Grace Murray to marry him. On 1st September, his journal records:

After preaching we had a long Dispute and such a Contention arose as never happened with us before. This Day I shall remember so long as I have breath.

<sup>24</sup> The *Epistle* is situated in Bennet's letter-book between other documents dated 6th and 27th January 1748-9. Quakerism was very strong in the Todmorden area (cf. R. Muschamp: *The Story of the Quakers: Early Happenings in Todmorden and District*), and the traditional site of the first Quarterly Meeting had formerly been a Quaker meeting-place. It seems at least possible that Bennet's visit there was the occasion of his reading and transcribing the *Epistle*.

<sup>25</sup> One of the functions of the Quaker Quarterly Meeting also 'was the obtaining of redress for those illegally prosecuted or imprisoned' (*Christian Discipline of the Society of Friends*, 1883, p. 175).

<sup>26</sup> Bennet's journal, 8th May 1749.

On the 2nd 'The Dispute somew[ha]t ended in favor of me', and he returned to Sheffield. A month later, urged on by Charles Wesley, he married Grace Murray at Newcastle, leaving John Wesley to mourn in verse 'the friend than life more dear' torn from his 'inly-bleeding heart'.

For some months Bennet's journal was neglected. Nor did Wesley's *Journal* make any mention of the tension between himself and Bennet, nor even of the epochal Methodist Conference held in November, when Wesley entrusted to his successful rival the organization of Quarterly Meetings throughout Methodism. The main purpose of that Conference was 'a general union of our Societies throughout England' such as had been proposed more than a year previously. Some of its resolutions were later printed by Wesley himself in the first edition of the *Large Minutes*. One of the main tasks was to define the duties of the Assistant or superintendent preacher in each Circuit. The Assistant was instructed:

To hold Quarterly Meetings, and therein diligently to inquire both into the spiritual and temporal state of each Society. . . . To send from every Quarterly Meeting a circumstantial account to London, (1) Of every remarkable conversion, (2) Of everyone who dies in the triumph of faith. . . . To . . . inquire at the Quarterly Meeting what each Preacher's wife will want for the ensuing quarter.<sup>27</sup>

The manuscript minutes of the Conference, however, in the hand of Wesley, furnish many additional details as to how the Assistant should set about his work of spiritual and temporal oversight of the Societies in his Circuit. They also make it quite clear who was the originator of the new system:

Q[uestion] 9. But some of them know not the nature of Quarterly Meetings. How shall we help them?

A[nswer]. Desire John Bennet, 1. To send us up his plan. 2. To go himself as soon as may be to Newcastle and Wednesbury, and teach them the nature and method of these meetings.<sup>28</sup>

Unfortunately the minutes for the next few years are missing, so that it is difficult to trace with any certainty the spread of the new organization. That Bennet continued for a short time at least to exercise oversight of the Quarterly Meetings in his own neighbourhood is shown by his journal for 1st February 1750:

Being the Quarterly Meeting at Burstol [Birstall] I assisted the Stewards &c. in regulateing the Affairs of the Society. But Alas! They all seem'd confused, and no regular Order was observed. Oh! wt. need of Discipline.

Four days later he was present at the Leeds Quarterly Meeting. But neither his journal (which became increasingly scrappy) nor other sources have so

<sup>27</sup> *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences*, 1862 edition, I.44-5. The duty of keeping Wesley informed about local conditions had been laid down by the preceding Conference, but that of looking after the preacher and his family was a new regulation. Turning to the account book of the Todmorden Edge Quarterly Meeting, we discover that in January 1749 they had disbursed

'To William Darney's Wife . . .	1.10.0
A pair of boots for Wm. Darney . . .	14.0'

and the following quarter Mrs. Darney received two guineas. (*W.H.S. Proceedings*, XXIII.113. cf. Simon: *John Wesley and the Advance of Methodism*, pp. 155-6.)

<sup>28</sup> *W.H.S. Publications*, 1.65.

far provided any evidence that he actually carried out his proposed functions of sponsoring Quarterly Meetings in other parts of the country, and Wesley expressly states that he himself conducted the first Quarterly Meeting held at Newcastle, as late as 1753. Even the two pioneer organizations at Todmorden Edge and Woodley for which Bennet was certainly responsible seem both to have fallen through before the Conference of 1749 officially blessed such meetings. The preaching-services at Robert Swindell's home in Woodley (and therefore almost certainly the Quarterly Meetings as well) were discontinued by Bennet himself, and the Todmorden Edge meeting lapsed in October 1749, not to be revived until July 1754.<sup>29</sup> Bennet had introduced the Quarterly Meeting into Methodism, but henceforth it must apparently carry on without him.

Already, however, the mixed spiritual and temporal functions of the Quarterly Meeting had been laid down in practice, as well as in Bennet's letter of 22nd October 1748 to Wesley, quoted above. Stewards and Class Leaders had been assembled with the preachers, bringing in the contributions of each Society toward the well-being of all, which included not only caring for the needs of the preachers and their families, but also helping Societies in need of accommodation or of legal protection. The spiritual welfare of the Societies was also the concern of the Quarterly Meeting, and the gatherings themselves opportunities for spiritual uplift.<sup>30</sup>

The immense value of this new organization was quickly seen by Wesley, and he was soon at work shaping it to the needs of the Methodism which he knew as did no one else. In his hands it became more than the meeting of a group of local Societies, as it seems to have been with Bennet. He intended that it should be a *Circuit* Quarterly Meeting—in spite of the huge areas covered by the Circuits of those days. In August 1750, at St. Ives, he wrote:

We had a Quarterly Meeting, at which were present the stewards of all the Cornish societies.<sup>31</sup>

He seems even to have had this ideal for Ireland, which was then regarded as one round, though divided into several sections. At the first recorded Irish Conference, held by Wesley in Limerick in August 1752, one minute read:

Q[uestion]. When and where shall the Quarterly Meetings be kept for the following year?

A[nswer.] At Cork, Limerick, Colylough, and Lisburn, on the Tuesdays after Michaelmas and Christmas, Lady-day and Midsummer.<sup>32</sup>

A fortnight later Wesley held what may have been the first try-out of the new idea at Coolalough, when he 'met many of [his] friends from all parts'.<sup>33</sup> In April of that same year the Cheshire Quarterly Meeting had been restarted, at Booth Bank, this time again as a full *Circuit* gathering, whose accounts were headed:

<sup>29</sup> Bennet's journal, 22nd August 1749. *W.H.S. Proceedings*, XXIII.113.

<sup>30</sup> cf. Simon: *John Wesley and the Advance of Methodism*, pp. 157-8.

<sup>31</sup> *Wesley's Journal*, III.491. When later Cornwall was divided into two Circuits, their two Quarterly Meetings met on successive days. cf. *Wesley's Journal*, V.148.

<sup>32</sup> *Minutes* (1862 edition), I.715.

<sup>33</sup> *Wesley's Journal*, IV.39. cf. IV.175, 394, 514.

A True Account of the Money Bro<sup>t</sup> in by the Stewards from Each Society in the Manchester Round; for the use of the Preachers, and for ye discharging of Necessary Expence, Aprill ye 20, 1752.<sup>34</sup>

By this time Bennet's estrangement from Wesley had been brought to a head by disputes over Bolton Methodism, and it seemed fairly clear that any further organization would have to be undertaken by Wesley himself. Accordingly we read in his *Journal* for May 1753:

We had the first General Quarterly Meeting of all the stewards round Newcastle, in order thoroughly to understand both the spiritual and temporal state of every society.<sup>35</sup>

In the deliberations of the 1753 Conference the regular establishment of Quarterly Meetings is taken for granted:

Let the Assistant inquire what each Preacher's wife wants, at every Quarterly Meeting.<sup>36</sup>

Even in 1755, however, Wesley had to challenge his preachers with the fact that the Methodist organization was still not working as smoothly as it might, though he did not mention Quarterly Meetings by name:

What Assistant inforces uniformly every Branch of the Methodist Plan on the preachers and people? Visits all the Societies quarterly? . . . Do you send me a regular Account quarterly?<sup>37</sup>

In spite of the slowness of some individuals to take up the new idea, however, the Methodist Quarterly Meeting as the organization having oversight of both the spiritual and temporal welfare of each Circuit had come to stay. When that well-known Friend, Dr. John Rutty of Dublin, in 1771 wrote *An Essay toward a Contrast between Quakerism and Methodism* he pointed out in parallel columns the similarities between the two communities, including a reference to the fact that the Methodists also

hold their weekly, quarterly, and yearly meetings of conference, in proper subordination, by which means the state of the society in each district is properly represented.

Strangely enough, although Dr. Rutty was friendly with Wesley both before and after the holding of the first Methodist Quarterly Meeting, he did not suggest that Methodism was indebted to the Quakers for this valuable institution.<sup>38</sup> As we have seen, however, its pedigree was somewhat mixed, with foreshadowings in various other religious organizations, though particularly in the Society of Friends. Its Methodist pioneer was undoubtedly John Bennet, but its fuller development was left to other preachers, under the oversight of that great organizing genius, John Wesley.

FREDERICK HUNTER  
FRANK BAKER

<sup>34</sup> *W.H.S. Proceedings*, VII.79; *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* (1843), 26-8, 379-80.

<sup>35</sup> *Wesley's Journal*, IV.65.

<sup>36</sup> *Minutes* (1862 edition), I.719. This is, of course, a repetition of the ruling of the 1749 Conference.

<sup>37</sup> *W.H.S. Publications*, I.69.

<sup>38</sup> *Essay . . . by Johannes Catholicus*, p. 18. Copy at Friends House, London, kindly lent by Mr. John Nickalls, the Librarian. For its ascription to Rutty, see Joseph Smith: *Catalogue of Friends' Books*, p. 521. cf. *Wesley's Journal*, III.348, 396; VI.58; *W.H.S. Proceedings*, VII.53-5.

## CHRISTIANITY AND COMMUNISM

### An Assessment of the Issue

THE RECENT Bristol Conference had for its consideration a resolution calling attention to the challenge of Communism to the Christian Faith, and asking our Church to give guidance on the matter, especially to those responsible for the leadership of youth. The subject was in the minds, if not always on the lips, of a good many other speakers, in the Centenary Year of the publication of *The Manifesto of the Communist Party*. In 1848, Marx and Engels could claim that 'Communism is already acknowledged by all European powers to be itself a power'; if that could be asserted one hundred years ago, how much more true it is today. Outside the Soviet Union, the first State to be organized in allegiance to their teaching, and China, there are at least eleven million members of the Party.<sup>1</sup> In this country, the membership at the moment is not much above forty thousand (a drop of twenty thousand on their peak total a few years ago), but there is no denying the quality, both of mind and character, of many whom it has attracted into its ranks. Is it possible to make an objective assessment of the situation before us?

For many people, the issue is quite clear. Communism is atheist and materialistic; it is totalitarian in a manner worse even than Nazism—indeed, did not the Gestapo learn all it knew from the OGPU? However much we may be tempted by a certain plausible parallel between its 'ideals' and those of Christianity, in practice it is cynically ruthless and immoral. As recent events in Czechoslovakia and elsewhere make clear, the end justifies any means; despite its professions of humanity and democracy, it exploits economic chaos to thwart the plans of a war-weary world toward recovery. By its soulless regimentation, in the interests of a purely material programme, it has little or no regard for human personality, family ties, free expression in the creative arts or impartial inquiry after truth. At these and many other points, it flatly contradicts the Christian Faith, and Christians therefore have no option but to resist it with all the means in their power.

Perhaps the one sobering restraint on this view is the realization that it could lead ultimately to what we all fear, viz. atomic war, though a preventive war against the Soviet Union is precisely what is being urged immediately, by certain intellectuals who were pacifists when Nazism was rampant. (That fact is not overlooked by the Communists when they hear us speaking about our 'absolute' values.) Is it fantastic to suggest that, in view of the unpredictable devastation which atomic war may bring, Communists and Christians alike have a concern to see that such a tragedy for the race is averted? Is it incredible that Russia, having suffered so severely in the recent conflict, may be sincere in her wish for peaceful co-operation? Her attitude over the European Recovery Programme, her actions in China, Berlin, and countries behind 'The Iron Curtain', seem to us not to confirm that sincerity, and we question whether Russia is only interested in peace till she has become

<sup>1</sup> H. Pollitt, *Looking Ahead*, p. 18.



strong enough again to pursue her aims of world-wide proletarian revolution. Thus, even despite our fears of atomic war, we are sometimes tempted to flirt with the idea that, as we failed to do with Nazism, we ought to stop her now, before it is too late. And Russia, remembering 1917, 1941, and many a diplomatic and economic incident between those two years, and since, remains convinced that the capitalist world will make yet one greater attempt to overthrow the 'first workers' State', and so is driven, in the interests of security, to a policy which seems to confirm our worst suspicions.

Space is too limited to adduce all the evidence that this vicious circle can be broken. The Christian at least, who claims to believe in the Sovereignty of God, and refuses to accept any determinism, economic or otherwise, will surely be ready to admit the possibility. Is the ghastly issue of atomic war itself sufficient to constrain us to an unemotional and objective reassessment of the challenge which Communism presents to us? For behind the 'atrocities', the expediency, and the 'party line', there is a profound intellectual discipline which has yet to receive the attention it merits. William Temple, in so important a place as his Gifford Lectures, said:

I believe that the Dialectical Materialism of Marx, Engels, and Lenin has so strong an appeal to the minds of many of our contemporaries, and has *so strong a foundation in contemporary experience*, that only a Dialectic more comprehensive in its range of apprehension and more thorough in its appreciation of the interplay of factors in the real world, can overthrow it or modify it as a guide to action.<sup>2</sup>

We are often assured that Marx has long since been put in his place, by the philosophers and economists. It is somewhat disconcerting therefore to find that the old man will not 'stay put'. Those of us who have neither the time nor the adequate equipment to investigate fully, but who will be coming up pastorally against this question, will depend largely on how much our thinkers and leaders awake to the firmly-based (if revolutionary) quality of Marxist thinking. Though we should resent such cavalier treatment of the Christian case, pulpit and platform are constantly making judgements on Communism which only reflect on us by revealing the slenderest acquaintance with the subject. We may still decide that Communism ought to be opposed, but if so, that decision ought to be made, in loyalty to Christian standards of truth, only on the broadest basis of fact. 'Those responsible for the leadership of youth' will do the Church no service, if youth discovers, as it easily could, that what was being so brilliantly demolished was but a garbled and out-of-date view of the subject. And much more serious are the political and practical questions which Marxism relentlessly presses upon us—in this country, if we were ready to hear them, especially on us Methodists!

We ought not perhaps to begin with the 'ideological' question, for, as the Marxist insists, that is simply a reflection in our minds of the immediate material situation. But for us it is fundamental. We have received the faith once delivered, of God as He is revealed in Christ. From that central fact our whole understanding of life and the world is derived. Through Christ's Redeeming Act there comes a quite distinctive Christian view of man, which has eternal and abiding consequences even here and now. We need not take

<sup>2</sup> *Nature, Man and God*, pp. 9-10 (italics mine).

the point farther for the moment; the Marxist and the Christian have already come apart fundamentally. One believes in God, upon whom all things depend; to the other, that is but one form of the 'idealism' which man is at last able to outgrow, now that he understands the basic nature of matter. Is there any hope of the two views meeting? At the moment, frankly not; on that, both sides are agreed. A few Christians have strangely seen no difficulty here, and so have failed to commend themselves to their fellow-religionists. Two things need very firmly stating. First, Christians do not think that their faith can be fully explained in terms of the social and material environment, even though Marxism has something important to say to us on that score. If we are sadly ignorant about Marxism, all too often they are even more woefully misinformed about us, and the reasons for, and content of, our belief. The 'inwardness' and the self-authenticating power of religious experience are often quite unknown to our critic; that is why we have to say, in all sincerity, 'you have not even touched the core of the thing'. The second thing follows this closely. The present climate of theological conviction, after more than a century of fearless criticism and reverent inquiry, is a return toward the orthodoxy of the Historic Faith. This, we claim, is not just 'reaction'; if it goes 'beyond liberalism', it certainly is not a going behind it. We claim, on scientific grounds, that our faith has stood the test of fullest factual research, and to base an estimate of Christianity today on *Theses on Feuerbach* and Strauss's *Leben Jesu*, which seem to have settled the issue for Marx and Engels, is to be hopelessly in error. For those of us who are quite unable to cut the knot by surrendering our Christian belief, only one like William Temple, who held the full historic faith, and understood the tension it makes in its richness with the urgent material questions of the hour, will be able to help. Easy 'leftish' pictures of 'Christ as the first Socialist', generalizations about 'the Kingdom of God upon earth', treatment of the Faith as a private opinion just when we have so long been accused of keeping faith and life apart—all these must leave us profoundly unsatisfied, and not, we submit, for purely reactionary reasons.

At the moment, then, we must be prepared for a deep ideological difference. Some tentative approaches have been made to bridge the gulf, mainly from the Christian side,<sup>3</sup> but they have so far met with little attention. Whether or not, when material well-being increases, the question of Purpose in the Universe will give us a closer point of meeting, remains to be seen. Marxists do not believe the world is a soulless machine, but they do not accept Purpose, in our sense. 'Man will be truly free, when he owes his existence to himself.'

Meanwhile, Christians who would still commend the Gospel to their contemporaries, have some points to note for themselves. Our first, and apparently hardest, task is to bring up to date our ideas about 'materialism'. The mechanistic views of mid-Victorian days are as dead as the dodo, and no one criticized them more severely than Marx. Whatever is to be the Christian estimate of scientific humanism, we are not now dealing with something which 'explains man in terms of a grubbing materialism'. We claim the traditions and achievements of Science as one of the finest products of our Western, Christian civilization, and then speak as though it may destroy us because we have not

<sup>3</sup> e.g. Nersoyan, *Christian Approach to Communism* (Muller).

found the way to control it! We produced it; but only Marxism has found the way to build its life on the lessons it is teaching us! Christianity, said William Temple, is the most materialistic of all the world's religions; it takes matter seriously, and rejects the Gnostic view of its inherent evil. Yet we still affect to find materialism an attitude degrading to man, while in fact matter is the basis of all life, and we are materialists everyone of us. Our task is rather to see the significance of a radically new understanding of matter which Science is unveiling. By showing how the whole material world, and man as part of it, is interrelated, it is offering for the first time the power to man, through obedience, to control, and so to remake, his world. Science is creating a new civilization, even a new man, whom Christians could see as fulfilling the divine command to 'have dominion'.<sup>4</sup> If we are content to say, amid pressing social and material problems, 'man cannot save himself', when he knows that he can, and must, need we wonder that he turns increasingly to what offers him real guidance and a substantial hope, precisely because it is not rooted in a doubtful Unseen, but in the tested practice of material knowledge? Let's call a halt to the mis-directed scorn of a reverent approach to the substance of the Universe; in its dialectical form, it includes much that we rightly fought for against the mechanists. The issue with Science is no longer correctly posed as 'matter *versus* spirit'.<sup>5</sup>

Our ideological differences with Marxists are admittedly deep; must it not follow that our practice will vary? On grounds of principle, we say 'yes', but we ought, as Niebuhr insisted, to inquire whether 'principle' is always the uncompromised spiritual loyalty that we imagine. Marx's case is to show the 'class-nature' of much of our thinking. 'The ruling ideas are the ideas of the ruling classes'—and that includes the ideas of religion. We may not like him for having said that; if it is wrong, we must clearly answer him. If not, we must realize that when we invoke our highest principles, we shall simply be interpreted as self-deluded upholders of a decaying (and unjust) order. We shall cut no ice till we have faced frankly Marx's charge that our 'absolute' moral standards are purely propaganda weapons, at best rationalization, at worst a fraud.<sup>6</sup>

The Marxist pleads that our concern for social justice could lead us to common action, leaving aside, in mutual respect, our ideological differences. Here is the most pressing issue for us to settle. Marx did not sit in the Reading Room of the British Museum for thirty years, simply to study how to achieve personal power, or to take in the gullible masses by propaganda. He offered the world a carefully supported, revolutionary thesis, based on the *facts* of social and economic history. Do we think to unseat his analysis, merely by theory—or by ideals? 'The philosophers have sought to understand the world; our task now is to change it,' Marx said. Is he, and those who use his analysis to understand the contemporary world, right or wrong? Do we deny the fundamental fact of 'the class-struggle', which involves us all willy-nilly, whether we be poets or preachers, black-coats or crossing-sweepers? We grow daily louder in our criticisms of Marxist ruthlessness, and oppression of

<sup>4</sup> Genesis 1<sup>st</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> See F. Welbourn's invaluable study of Waddington's position, in *Science and Humanity* (S.C.M.).

<sup>6</sup> cf. John Lewis, *Modern Quarterly* (Autumn 1946).

personality, but entirely from non-Marxist sources we could compile a similar indictment of capitalism. Then what do we propose as an alternative, not in attractive theory, but as a practical possibility in the world as it is today? Is the Marxist right in saying that a truly co-operative society cannot emerge by peaceful means out of the present chaos, that only by a radical, if bloodless, change of power (as occurred in Czechoslovakia) can we remove injustice? Is it true that Social Democracy is but a modification, not an alternative, of Capitalism, and that it must split, right and left, as the latter's internal contradictions force a final world crisis? That question alone is of practical importance especially to us, remembering that amongst the most loyal section of our Church is a large artisan and middle-class community. Is it just fantastic eye-wash? If not, shall we leave our people without guidance, or any preparation for a situation which may one day face them urgently?

It is neither delusive optimism nor blind determinism which makes the Marxist sure of a coming day of justice for all; it is based on a scientific attempt to understand the actual way the Universe is working, and by obedient co-operation and creativeness therein, to align himself with its purpose. For the moment, that means war against injustice, and he wonders that of all people Christians do not join him there. And yet he is not really surprised; religion turns men's eyes from the urgent problems of their material existence. If he's wrong, why do we let him get away with that? And we say we do not like his methods. We may believe it or not, but neither does he! Is it true that Christians can fail to recognize a disinterested, costly social concern when they see it? What is it in Marxism which appeals to some of our own finest youth, who have everything to lose by a social upheaval? If social justice could be achieved by better, i.e. more effective means, he would be the first to rejoice. The Marxist resents the constant charge that he *invented* the class-struggle, or, in a world which hungers for co-operation, that he only offers class-hatred. He insists that he found the struggle already the dominant reality, in one form or another, throughout man's recorded history, and his concern is to *end* it. The struggle, he says, is *forced* on him; what practical alternative have we to offer him? 'Yes, I'd like to be a Christian', said a Rumanian Communist recently, 'but it's too slow.' Is it?

T. J. FOINETTE

<sup>7</sup> *Spectator* (19th March 1948).

## THE CHURCH AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

THE REPORTS of the First Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam have now been published. Sections III and IV dealing respectively with the Disorder of Society and the International Disorder, attracted the fullest attention at the time and not unnaturally so, for they both dealt with matters that are topical and controversial.

The Amsterdam Assembly met at a time of critical international tension and when the issue of peace and war was uppermost in men's minds—as it still is.

We had to consider and define the Christian attitude to Communism. We were conscious that many of us, as citizens of this or some other national State, might one day have to fulfil our national duty in a war against a Communist Power. If, which God forbid, that day were to arrive, one knows in advance that it would be the duty of the statesmen and politicians to secure for such a war the maximum backing up of moral righteous fervour that could be built up. As Christians, we have to take a more detached view. We proclaimed at Amsterdam that war is contrary to the Will of God. It is incompatible with the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is a condemnation of our neglect of God's Word.

But there was no agreement on the question: What is the Christian duty in a total war, with all its atomic and other horrors. The three different positions on the perplexing question of whether war can in modern conditions ever be an act of justice are fully set out for each to decide according to his conscience. Indeed, in considering, as I hope you will, the detailed Reports of the discussions at Amsterdam, it is important to bear in mind that our primary object was not to seek agreement, but by prayer and thought and study, and in the fullest Christian humility and contrition, to seek to know the Will of God.

The Reports should be read in this light. We went to Amsterdam not to be dogmatic, but as patient seekers after truth. And truth is many-sided. It is not given to any one of us, or to any group of us in any one land, to see more than certain facets of the truth.

I was deeply impressed, as I think were most of us, by the general attitude of patient readiness to learn and listen. (All this was in marked contrast to debates with which I am more familiar.) This Christian tolerance and restraint were particularly remarkable in the Sections dealing with Communism. On the opening day there seemed a danger of real conflict. Mr. John Foster Dulles, the distinguished American churchman and statesman, spoke in terms which suggested to some that the World Council might be used as a crusading instrument against the evils, the tyranny, the atheism of Communism. He was followed immediately by Professor Hromadka, Professor of Theology, a member of the Central Action Committee under the Communist regime in Czechoslovakia, in a valiant attempt to reconcile his Christian faith with his Communist position.

As you will see, the World Council resisted any attempt to aline Christianity with any political movement. The Church must always and impartially condemn evil, tyranny, and injustice, wherever they are found. The Church, by



its insistence on the truth of revealed Christianity and the reality of moral values, must always speak on a higher plane.

The crux of the Assembly's Report on the Disorder of Society is contained in the paragraph headed 'Communism and Capitalism'. It says, and I would emphasize:

Christians should realize that all over Europe for many young men and women Communism seems to stand for a vision of human equality and universal brotherhood for which they were prepared by Christian influences. Christians who are beneficiaries of capitalism should try to see the world as it appears to many who know themselves excluded from its privileges and to see in Communism a means of deliverance from poverty and insecurity. . . . It is a great human tragedy that so much that is good in the motives and aspirations of many Communists and of those whose sympathies they win has been transformed into a force that engenders new forms of injustice and oppression. . . . The Christian therefore rejects the ideologies which underlie both laissez-faire Capitalism and Communism. Each has made promises which it could not redeem. . . . Communism promises that freedom will follow automatically upon the completion of the revolution; Capitalism promises that justice will follow as a by-product of free enterprise. That, too, is an ideology which has proved false.

It is thus proclaimed that Christianity cannot identify itself with any political system or with any social ideology that is not wholly Christian.

The Christian Church says that neither the culture or secular liberalism nor the lofty ideals of Marxist equality can ever satisfy elementary Christian standards and requirements. The first Christian duty is still enshrined in the First Commandment: 'I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have none other gods but me.' This sets in its true perspective the Christian attitude toward all social and international problems.

The equal condemnation of Communism and Capitalism was inspired by the contributions to the Amsterdam discussions of an awakening, aspiring, expectant Orient, as well as those of a suffering, bewildered, anxious Europe.

One of the stimulating and salutary lessons of an Ecumenical Conference is to find that one's own insular prejudices—even one's own European outlook—is corrected by the experiences and problems of Christians from other Continents.

We cannot ignore the fact that while the radicalism of Protestant Christianity in Europe is as strongly anti-Communist as the Pope, the radicalism of Africa, Asia, and particularly China, is not unfriendly to Communism. As Reinhold Niebuhr said:

The poverty of the Orient, the resentment of the coloured peoples against the white man's arrogance, the aspirations of colonial peoples, rightly or wrongly imagining that Russia is their champion against the Imperialistic Powers, are all factors that contribute to the formation of something new in the history of Christianity. This something new is not exactly Christian Communism, but a form of Christianity sympathetic to Communism.

But, however tolerant we may be toward the aspirations of Communism in Asia, it is, as the Report insists, 'part of the mission of the Church to raise its

voice of protest, wherever men are the victims of terror, wherever they are denied fundamental human rights, and wherever governments use torture to intimidate the conscience of men'.

But this is only one side of the matter. There are yawning conflicts between Christianity and Capitalism. They vary from country to country. In our own the exploitation of workers that was characteristic of early Capitalism has been assuaged and corrected in large measure by the influence of Trade Unions, social legislation, and responsible management. But Capitalism tends to produce serious inequalities and has developed a background of materialism that is at variance with Christian beliefs and ethics.

We have admittedly, as a nation, made considerable advances during the last generation in every sphere of social and humanitarian reform. But these have not been accompanied by any increase in Christian witness or belief. The reverse is the case. We have been living on our Spiritual Capital, and practice unsupported by belief is a wasting asset. As a nation, we have in the Spiritual sphere, no less than in the Economic sphere, been using up our reserves. We have to replenish our spiritual heritage—and this by prayer, by practice, by dedication—and not least, by study of the particular Christian application of our Faith to the practical problems of our day.

There may have been a time—I do not know—when the Church could afford to be indifferent to politics and when there was a clearer line of demarcation between the activities of Church and State—when it was easier to interpret and observe the injunction: 'Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's but unto God the things that are God's.'

But the dominant factors of the modern technical society are the vast concentrations of economic power in the hands either of a few or of the State.

The word 'totalitarian'—like Mesopotamia—needs a good deal of analysis, but as Christians we can assert the central truth that God alone can claim man's total obedience. Any system which derogates from the right of each individual to do God's Will according to his conscience is repugnant to the Christian faith. This does not mean that in our modern complex technical society we can neglect our duty to influence on Christian lines the decisions and attitudes which affect society in its human relations.

I thought most of the Amsterdam delegates were rather shocked at the torrential but provocative speech of Karl Barth on the opening day, putting the passive theological case at its highest and seeming to say that it was not for us to worry about the existing disorders of society but that God's Will will be worked out in His way, that God's design is His plan and that the Kingdom we should acknowledge is 'already come, already victorious, already founded in all its majesty—our Lord Jesus Christ who has already robbed sin and death, the devil and hell of their power, and already vindicated divine and human justice in His own person'.

If this were the whole truth the Moscow patriarchs may well have been justified in their abstention from Amsterdam on the theological argument that the Church should not concern itself with purely secular matters. This was not the mood of the Assembly.

It is for each one of us to examine whether, under God's guidance, we can in our daily lives contribute to the requirements of social justice. Collectively, 'the

greatest contribution that the Church can make to the renewal of society is for it to be renewed in its own life in faith and obedience to its Lord'.

May I say one final word? It is easy to condemn the existing disorders of society and of political systems. It is not difficult to *analyse* their origins and causes. It is more difficult to *construct* in the present tempo of our changing complex society a structure of social relationships which will command the respect and allegiance of Christian opinion. That task of constructive effort will be the more satisfactory to Christian opinion in the degree to which members of the Churches make an active contribution to it. There was a time in this country when religion was identified with reaction. The sentiments expressed and the convictions recorded at Amsterdam conclusively refute that charge today. If the Church and the Churches are to play their part in guiding the destiny of mankind in the critical years ahead, religion must not be static but must march with the events of history. Theology must keep abreast of the profound social and economic changes that are shaping human destiny. Perhaps the most important, and certainly the most exciting task for Christian men and women today, is to think out and reinterpret the lessons of Christian duty in terms of current problems and social relations. Amsterdam, which I regard as the most notable event in Protestant Christianity since the Reformation, has made a notable contribution to this task. It is now for us to follow up throughout our several congregations the task that has been so well begun.

ERIC G. M. FLETCHER

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## 'BUILT UP IN OUR MOST HOLY FAITH'

*They were built up in our most holy faith. They rejoiced in the Lord more abundantly. They were strengthened in love, and more effectually provoked to abound in every good work.*<sup>1</sup>

WE MUST start to build up those who are already truly converted. In this respect our work is various, according to the various states of Christians.' Thus wrote Richard Baxter. After describing the needs of the immature, and of those tempted or mastered by some particular sin, he added: 'The last class whom I shall notice, as requiring our particular attention, are the strong; for they, also, have need of our assistance: partly to preserve the grace they have; partly to help them in making further progress; and partly to direct them in improving their strength. . . .'<sup>2</sup> It is the purpose of this article to suggest some Biblical and Theological reasons why a renewed emphasis upon this central aspect of Christian life is required. In making this study we shall direct special attention to the thought and practice of John Wesley. Methodism, it will be urged, largely owed its former strength to clear theoretical understanding of, and unique practical provision for, the building up of Christians. Even if, however, in the Providence of God, Methodism has been thus used, and is capable of still being used, this is no denominational eccentricity that we are about to consider. The New Testament is our source-book, and Christian history, both in triumph and in failure, provides far more sign-posts of example and warning than this brief article can demonstrate.

### I

Recent New Testament study has provided much significant evidence of the systematic and carefully planned training of Christian converts in the early Church. Dr. Carrington's book, *The Primitive Christian Catechism* (1940), gave what now seems to be widely accepted as convincing proof of the existence of catechetical patterns or forms of instruction for those who were about to be baptized or who had been baptized. Dr. E. G. Selwyn, in his recent Commentary on First Peter, has developed this evidence at very considerable length. And Mr. Godfrey Phillips, in a work written before he had read Dr. E. D. Selwyn's Commentary, has discussed this same evidence with special reference to the history of Christian evangelism.<sup>3</sup> From these studies—and from others which might be mentioned, such as A. M. Hunter's *Paul and his Predecessors*—it seems quite clear that detailed instruction, both in the qualities of Christian character and in the nature of personal and corporate Christian worship and Church-life, was given from a very early period. Space will only permit the quotation of one piece of the evidence. A comparative study of

<sup>1</sup> John Wesley, *A Plain Account of the People called Methodists* (Wesley's Works, 3rd edn., Vol. VIII, p. 259).

<sup>2</sup> *The Reformed Pastor*, II.2.i. (See also *The Reformed Pastor* by Richard Baxter, Ed. by John T. Wilkinson (The Epworth Press, 1939), pp. 78, 81.) I may be allowed to note that, toward the end of the last century, Mr. T. H. Bainbridge of Newcastle, fulfilling a wish expressed by my grandfather shortly before his death, presented each Wesleyan Methodist Ordinand with a copy of this work. Would that somebody might revive the custom!

<sup>3</sup> *The Transmission of the Faith* (Lutterworth).

Romans, Colossians, Ephesians, 1 Peter, James, and Philipians, provides Dr. Selwyn with the following scheme of instruction:

- (i) The entry into the new life at Baptism:
  - (a) its basis—the Word, truth, gospel;
  - (b) its nature—rebirth, new creation, new manhood.
- (ii) The new life; its negative implications.
- (iii) The new life: its faith and worship.
- (iv) The new life: its social virtues and duties.
- (v) Teaching called out by crisis (Watchfulness, Prayer, Steadfastness).<sup>4</sup>

Missionary experience overseas, the growth of the younger Churches, and the growing awareness at home that the Church in Britain is once again a missionary Church in a non-Christian environment—all these facts shed light upon the New Testament. We can, for example, understand how easily-remembered instructions and manuals of instruction would be required very soon after the Day of Pentecost. We can understand, also, the frequency with which particular sins are mentioned, notably idolatry and covetousness (*pleonexia*), and sexual uncleanness. Mr. Godfrey Phillips, in the book already mentioned, has given illustrations of particular moral problems that are to the fore in India, Africa, China, and other fields. It is, however, even more important that the New Testament should shed its light upon our contemporary situation and that we should re-learn from its pages the necessity for the continuance of 'the Apostles' teaching'.

In particular we need to be recalled to the interdependence of theology and ethics in the New Testament. The Epistle to the Philipians is a superb example, but only an example, of this inseparable unity of Faith and Works, of Theology and Ethics, of Gospel and Teaching. We have, happily, journeyed far from the bad days of Christian preaching in which so-called 'Christian Ethics' were substituted for the Gospel. Sermons of the 'Christianity and —' variety are now infrequent, and few are the Christians who still believe that one can invite men to a 'Christian way of life' that bypasses the proclamation and acceptance of the Gospel. Professor Dodd's *The Apostolic Preaching and its Development* has had a greater effect, direct and indirect, upon present-day preaching than has perhaps any other recent single influence.

There is, however, danger that the pendulum will swing too far. The writer, after many years in which he had little opportunity to hear others preach, has recently listened to many young preachers and to not a few of older years. If this experience is any guide to the facts, there is now little justification for the charge that the Gospel is not being preached. Certainly the charge cannot be levelled against those who are entering the ministry. Nearly every sermon to which one listens is a sermon to the unconverted, a declaration of 'the old, old, Story'. I understand that nearly every first sermon that is sent in to the B.B.C. starts by asking what is wrong with the world, and continues by declaring that God has been made Man for our salvation. We have at least begun to learn the primitive *Kerygma*. But the Church did not grow on the *Kerygma* alone; its life was sustained by the *Didache*. All too often, today, the pastor is only a fisherman, eager to catch the fish but

<sup>4</sup> *The First Epistle of St. Peter*, p. 389. (I have slightly abbreviated.)



not very interested in helping them to grow as sheep in the flock! Perhaps this is the root cause of our tendency to be impatient with the day-by-day life of the Church; we have lost sight of all that needs to be done for the faithful. Yet, when one looks back on twenty years of pastoral work, visits old scenes, and considers what has remained, the only cause for thankful joy is to be found in the long-term results of 'catechetical teaching', and the deepest regrets spring from the realization of neglected opportunities for building up the people of Christ. This will become increasingly true as converts are made in a non-Christian society. A Church cannot live on commando raids. A fish that is left on the hook is a dead fish.

## II

In the previous paragraphs we have adopted the distinction between *Kerygma* and *Didache*. There is value in maintaining this distinction, not least because it focuses attention upon the fact that Christian evangelism involves the constant repetition of the Sacred History of our salvation and that men cannot be eased into the Kingdom by moral exhortation. But, as with all distinctions, this separation between the Gospel and the Teaching has its perils. We may falsely conclude that the Gospel itself has no reference to prayer and worship, to Church and Sacraments, to personal and corporate moral qualities. Christian history contains many warnings of this danger. In particular we can learn from the false separation that has often been made between Justification and Sanctification.

It is at this point that we are brought back to John Wesley. I accept, as most significantly true, Cell's thesis that Wesley 'effected an original and unique synthesis of the Protestant ethic of grace with the Catholic ethic of holiness'.<sup>5</sup> This contribution made by Wesley has not yet been treated with sufficient attention by most Christian theologians, nor has it been adequately remembered and maintained by the people called Methodists. Too often Wesley's teaching about Sanctification has been studied and discussed with exclusive reference to the question of Entire Sanctification. Lengthy, not to say inconclusive, arguments concerning degrees and kinds of perfection have obscured Wesley's primary message. His refusal to separate Justification and Sanctification, his clear insistence that 'at the same time that we are justified, yea, in that very moment sanctification begins',<sup>6</sup> and his reiterated statement that sanctification is both instantaneous and gradual are aspects of the Gospel which need to be rediscovered today.

The most superficial knowledge of Wesley's teaching must include awareness of his conviction that both Justification and the beginning of Sanctification can take place in a moment of time. In one sense it is true to say that Wesley rejected the notion of 'gradual Christians', salvation by the escalator, as I believe Dr. Maltby described it. But this is only one half of the truth, and it is equally vital to recall that Wesley insisted upon the gradual character of salvation. This has been admirably expressed by Harald Lindström:

The fact that Wesley also sees salvation as a gradual development has been overlooked. Actually the idea of a gradual development is a most prominent element

<sup>5</sup> G. C. Cell, *The Rediscovery of John Wesley*, p. 347.

<sup>6</sup> *The Scripture Way of Salvation*.

in his conception of salvation and indeed in his thought generally. What happens is that these two elements, the instantaneous and the gradual, are merged, and the order of salvation peculiar to Wesley is the outcome of this mergence.<sup>7</sup>

Very many examples of this insistence upon growth might be given, but two must suffice. The famous conversation between Wesley and Zinzendorf hinges on this point. For example:

ZINZENDORF: A Christian is not *more* Holy, when he has *more*, nor *less* Holy, when he has *less*, of this Love.

WESLEY: How! Does not a believer, as he grows in Love, grow in Holiness?

ZINZENDORF: In no wise. The moment he is justified, he is sanctified wholly. And he is neither more nor less Holy, from that moment, to his death.

WESLEY: Is not then a Father in Christ Holier than a New-born Babe?

ZINZENDORF: No.<sup>8</sup>

Wesley's position is most carefully expounded in his sermon 'On working out our own salvation'.

By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favour of God; by sanctification we are saved from the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God. All experience, as well as Scripture, shows this salvation to be both instantaneous and gradual.<sup>9</sup>

Wesley proceeds to describe some of the ways in which we must work out our salvation, including zeal for good works, family prayer, partaking of the Lord's Supper, and so on. (There is a remarkable resemblance between this passage and the section of Baxter's *Reformed Pastor* quoted at the beginning of this article.) It would not be difficult to provide a catena of extracts from *Wesley's Works* to demonstrate his insistence upon the place of 'works' within the Christian life. Wesley's attitude to 'works' has been almost as gravely misunderstood as has that of Paul himself.

With this brief reminder of Wesley's theology we turn to his ordering of the life of the Methodist societies. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the whole pattern of Methodism, as drawn by Wesley's strong hand, was based upon this unity of Justification and Sanctification and upon this awareness that babes in Christ must be helped to maturity. Space will only permit one or two examples of this fact, but others will readily occur to the mind of the reader. We might consider his *Rules*, or his Covenant Service, or his various forms of inquiry for the use of his preachers. But the most significant example is to be found in the origin and purpose of the classes and bands. The description of the origin of the Methodist class, given in the *Plain Account*, is too familiar for quotation here. It will be recalled how Wesley describes the anxiety that was felt concerning the quality of life found among the converts and about the problem of backsliders. 'While we were thinking of quite another thing [financial problems] we struck upon a method for which we have cause to bless God ever since.' So there began one of the most perfectly adapted instruments for the building up of the Church in love, and for the

<sup>7</sup> *Wesley and Sanctification* (English Translation, p. 105).

<sup>8</sup> Quoted Lindström, *ibid.*, p. 138. The full conversation, in Latin, is in *Wesley's Journal* (3rd September 1741).

<sup>9</sup> Sermon LXXXV.

growth in sanctification of individual Christians, that any branch of the Christian Church has ever had.

Why did the class-meeting tend to disappear? That question is asked among Methodists whenever conversation about any other matter lags; it ought to be still our great concern to discover the reason. I venture to suggest that the root cause was a neglect of Wesley's combination of justification and sanctification. Classes were apt to become occasions for the recall of conversion-experiences; they ceased to be the sphere in which believers studied and prayed and strove and co-operated in the growth of life in the Spirit. One of the most hopeful signs in contemporary Methodism is that the need for this kind of Fellowship is being rediscovered by many young people who have no memories of either the degenerate or the living class-meeting. When a group of university students try to draw up new Methodist Rules they may make mistakes and not quite understand what they are doing, but who will dispute that they are looking in the right direction? When young Church members ask (as I know they very often do), 'We are not taught enough about how to say our prayers, how to read the Bible, what the Sacrament means, what a Christian ought to do about politics . . .,' they are asking for aid that they may be built up in our most holy faith. Which of us would claim that their needs are adequately met in the framework of present-day Church organization? I have received more than one request from Anglican Clergy to speak to their people concerning the Rules of Methodists, the discipline of our devotional life, and the spiritual training in our classes. I have had to offer a historical talk on eighteenth-century Methodism.

### III

There is a third reason for the need indicated in this article, and it is one which extends—as indeed do the others—far beyond the bounds of Methodism. In his recently published Bampton Lectures, Dr. P. A. Micklem has urged that 'what is called for today, with an urgency born of desperate human need, is a renewed synthesis of the two realms [the Secular and the Sacred], a synthesis less rigid indeed, and vastly wider and more comprehensive than that attained' in the medieval period.<sup>10</sup> Methodism has often been accused of widening the gap between 'the Secular and the Sacred' by its pietistic tendencies. It is not possible here to discuss that charge; but in so far as it contains truth the blame is not to be laid upon John Wesley. If ever a Christian evangelist had both feet rooted in this world Wesley had. Yet it cannot be denied that the Manichean heresy has not left any part of the Church untainted. It is, however, important to note that this is not only true of pietism; it is equally true of what is commonly called humanism. The error that the 'spiritual' life necessarily involves detachment from worldly affairs, and the delusion that man can order his public life without God, spring from the same root. The pietist and the humanist stand back-to-back on the same lost island. He who would keep politics out of religion and he who would keep religion out of politics are guilty of the same idolatry.

There is no deliverance from this false separation between the sacred and

<sup>10</sup> *The Secular and the Sacred*, p. 10.

the secular save as we discover the Biblical truth that 'salvation' involves the whole man in all aspects of his life. Because today our chief problems are social problems the need for decision in matters of politics, economics, and other public affairs is the most pressing and obvious need.' But there is in fact nothing new about this situation; only our awareness of it is greater. The peril is that we should seek an easy solution of the serious problems that face us by seeking to apply Christian 'principles' as a form of inoculation of a diseased society.

In the most careful use of the words there is no such thing as 'Christian politics'; there are only Christians in politics. One cannot 'run a business by Christian ideals', one can only be a Christian business-man. The Church's function with respect to the world is simply to *be* the Church in the world. These remarks may appear truisms, and little aid to making them realities is given by a mere statement of them. A score of questions, some of which are discussed in Dr. Micklem's book, are suggested even by the realization that the Church must be the Church-in-the-world. But none of those questions can be answered, still less can the Church fully become what God purposes it to be, until within the life of the Church itself Christians are more fully 'built up in our most holy faith'. Too often we imagine that a converted man is a mature Christian; we even pitifully hope that from the moment of his new birth he will have a political wisdom, a moral strength, and a spiritual development adequate to make him 'a leader in public affairs'. The Christian amateur is no less dangerous than is any other amateur. If the Christian could be segregated from his New-birth he might avoid some perils; it is with that hope in mind that so much of our Church-life does attempt to segregate its young believers. But that is plainly to disobey the will of our Lord who did not ask that we might be withdrawn from the world. Moreover, it is to make impossible the true growth in holiness.

It is strange that Protestants combine scorn of the monasteries (which were often by no means detached from the common life of man) with a religious escapism that is all our own. Better, at least, that Christians should separate themselves that they may spend their time in prayer than that they should isolate themselves from the world in order to hold hearty Church socials and innocuous fellowship meetings that neither search the depths of Christian life nor have windows open to the outside world. It is little wonder that preparation for suffering, which is one of the features of the primitive catechetical teaching that is most apparent in the records, should almost have dropped out of sight. It is difficult for the average Wesley Guilder to see that being a Christian involves any risk.

Yet, as these facts are remembered, we shall once again be in danger—all truth is perilous. Only as we keep central in our minds, in the 'shape' of our liturgy, and in the pattern of our Church-life, the utter dependence of the Christian upon the Holy Spirit can we safely break down the false barrier between the Sacred and the Secular. All matters are ultimately Theological matters, and (speaking in general terms) it is true to say that we are paying greater attention to the Second Person of the Trinity than to the Third. The Incarnation and Atonement are once again central in our Gospel. Perhaps few things are more necessary for the life of the Church and of the world than

is a renewed concentration upon the Gift and Work of the Holy Spirit. For reasons that are plain in Christian history, the Holy Spirit has tended to be monopolized by sectarians and fanatics. That is the fault of the main body of Christendom rather than of the sectarians; it is certainly not (if it may be said reverently) the fault of the Holy Spirit. With renewed faith and humility, within the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit, we need to claim the promise that 'if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, He that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through His Spirit that dwelleth in you'.<sup>11</sup>

FREDERIC GREEVES

<sup>11</sup> Romans 8<sup>11</sup>.

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## ISAAC WATTS: NONCONFORMIST

NOVEMBER 25TH 1948 marked the bicentenary of the death of Isaac Watts, and there is already evinced an awakening of interest in the work of this great man. It is not commonly realized that his greatness extended to more spheres than the hymnody of the Church. He was a minor poet, the merits of whose work have been rarely appreciated; the author of a text-book of logic which for many years was the standard book in the universities; a philosophical writer without knowledge of whom we cannot fully understand the religious thought of the eighteenth century; and a pioneer in educational literature of all kinds, one of the first in fact to give careful consideration to the religious instruction of children. Perhaps this very versatility of Watts dissipated the full force of his genius, and he might have been more effective as a writer had he limited his undoubted powers to fewer fields of study and reflection.

This essay is intended to emphasize one aspect of Watts's life and work, namely its *nonconformity*; he was a rebel, albeit a reasonable one, in his attitude to many of the conventions of his day.

The story of his life is already well known. He was born of Puritan parents at Southampton on 17th July 1674. His father, a schoolmaster, and deacon of the Independent Church, was several times imprisoned for his nonconformity; and one of the early memories of Isaac was of being taken in his mother's arms to visit his father in the gaol at Southampton. At an early age Watts had the scholar's passion for books. And it would seem, like Montaigne, he began to learn Latin when he was only four years old. Even as a child, his biographers tell us, he had considerable knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. There is evidence, too, that his metrical experiments date from his childhood. At seven years of age he was offered a farthing by his mother if he would make her some verses. He handed her the couplet:

*I write not for a farthing, but to try  
How I your farthing writers can outvie.*

Even in the nursery Watts was a rebel! Of course the story and the couplet may be apocryphal, but the verses do adumbrate the spirit of practically all Watts's later work in prose and verse—his stance of rebellion to some of the prevailing standards of his age, in religion and literature.

This rebelliousness in his character is further illustrated in the choice of higher education. There were well-to-do discerning folk in Southampton who saw the intellectual potentialities of the young Watts, and were prepared to send him to one of the ancient universities. Nonconformity was still being ostracized and persecuted, but Watts remained loyal to the communion in which he had been born and nurtured; and chose to go to one of the dissenting academies rather than to Oxford or Cambridge. Consequently, in the year 1690, when he was in his sixteenth year, Watts arrived at the academy at Stoke Newington.

The dissenting academies set up by Nonconformist ministers and schoolmasters after the great ejection of 1662—when thousands of the best men in the Church of England came out rather than conform to a system against their conscience—have never yet been given the place of importance they deserve in the history of higher education in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This is not the place to expand on their merits; but it must be said that they afforded, in some cases, a better all-round education than the older universities, balancing a classical training with some grounding in the sciences. It is not without significance that many of the finest brains in the country were educated in these academies, these lowly, unostentatious schools of learning established in the homes of ministers and schoolmasters in out-of-the-way country places. Thomas Secker (1693–1768), afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, received early training in three of these academies, where he studied science in preparation for the medical degree he subsequently received from the University of Leyden. Joseph Butler (1692–1752), author of the *Analogy of Religion*, one of the greatest of our eighteenth-century theologians and philosophers, was educated at the academy at Tewkesbury. Harley and Bolingbroke, leaders in the political sphere, were sometime students at an academy at Sheriffhales. The academy of Watts's choice was not without corresponding distinction. Its immediate predecessor had educated a number of prominent men in English public life. Here Samuel Wesley, the father of John and Charles, had been trained before he deserted the dissenters to go to Oxford. Also at Newington our great satirist and pioneer novelist, Daniel Defoe, had received his higher schooling. Defoe's tutor had been Charles Morton (1627–98), who went to New England in 1685, and became the Vice-President of Harvard College. The wide curriculum and liberal spirit of Stoke Newington Academy did much, we believe, to foster and strengthen the 'nonconformity' of young Watts.

His college course completed, Watts returned to his father's house at Southampton, much in the way of the young Milton whom he in some ways resembles, where he spent two and a quarter years in further study and meditation. In this period we have another expression of the rebel in his nature. The hymns in use in the Independent Meeting-house he attended with his parents were edited, it would seem, by William Barton, a Presbyterian minister at Leicester. This hymn-book, probably *Two Centuries of Select Hymns* (1670), was one of the finest collections of hymns in England at that time. The church at Southampton evidently was one of the few progressive churches of the day, and shared the concern of some of the London Nonconformist churches for a reformation in Church praise. But the young Watts was most dissatisfied with the hymns contained in this book, and went so far as to express his discontent. Milner, in his *Life, Times, and Correspondence of Isaac Watts* (1834), suggests that the complaint was made to his father, and it was he who challenged the young Watts to produce something better. The immediate result of this complaint and challenge was Watts's new kind of hymn: 'Behold the glories of the Lamb.' It would seem that this experiment in worship song 'caught on' in the Southampton meeting-house. And for the remaining two years of Watts's stay there he supplied the congregation with

a hymn probably every Sabbath. These were seemingly written out and sung from manuscript. Among them were now world-famous hymns such as 'When I survey the wondrous cross' and 'There is a land of pure delight'. The publication of this remarkable body of hymns was delayed until 1707.

Watts was now twenty-two years old, and left Southampton to become tutor to the son of Sir John Hartopp at Stoke Newington. Sir John was a staunch Nonconformist and a man of wide culture. He had married the granddaughter of Charles Fleetwood, Lord General of the army of the Commonwealth. During his work as a tutor Watts wrote many of his miscellaneous essays and the greater part of his *Logic*. Many of the lyrical poems in *Horae Lyricae* were dedicated to the younger Hartopp.

The Hartopps worshipped at the Independent Meeting-house in Mark Lane, London. And it was through their influence that Watts became assistant minister to Dr. Isaac Chauncey, pastor of the Church. On Chauncey's death Watts had sole pastoral charge. But, unfortunately, perhaps as a result of long mental strain, the young minister became almost a permanent invalid. It is no affectation that many of his hymns and verses are full of the experience of pain, weakness, and weariness. Watts, however, carried on the Church with the help of an assistant to the end of his days.

At the age of thirty-eight he was invited to spend a week with Sir Thomas and Lady Abney in their country house in Hertfordshire. And here, or at Abney House, Stoke Newington, he remained, like Cowper with the Unwins, to the end of his life, for thirty-six years, dying under their roof on 25th November 1748 in his seventy-fourth year. Had it not been for the kindness and patronage of the Abney family, Watts would have gone to an early grave; and the Christian world would never have received some of the riches of his mind and heart.

In his sumptuously furnished study at the Abneys you would have found his lute and telescope on the same table with the Bible. He might have had his treatise on logic in one hand, his *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* in the other. This mingling of culture with religion epitomizes the character of Isaac Watts. He was a great Christian Humanist. And hardly another writer in Nonconformity (apart from John Wesley, of course) affords a better example of the way faith and culture, reason and revelation can come together and be reconciled. In this side of his character he most clearly shows his affinity with the Platonists of Cambridge and Aberdeen.

But Watts is seen as a rebel chiefly perhaps in his *Psalms of David, imitated in the language of the New Testament* (1719). These are really more the Psalms of Isaac than the Psalms of David. They are not even a paraphrase, but an *imitation* of the Hebrew psalms in the light of the Christian Gospel and experience. They assume in the history of the evolution of the English hymn a halfway position between the old metrical psalmody and the accepted hymnody of the Church.

Should you wish to see what Isaac Watts was at in publishing this book, read its Preface—one of the really great prefaces in English literature—a typical *prologus galeatus*—armed strongly against the spears and swords of the enemies whom it would provoke to battle. Here we see Watts in hot

rebellion against all retrogressive tendencies in the worship-song of the Church. In this preface *with a helmet*—to say nothing of a sword—Watts hits out against the rigid adherence, of the majority of the churches of his day, to the religion of Judaism, so far as their communal praise was concerned. It was not merely against the literary poverty of the metrical psalms that Watts made his stand. He saw the danger of singing the Old Testament faith, when the Church had something far better and more glorious to sing. Generally speaking, we should hardly credit Watts with psychological insight. But he does display even that quality in his attack on the metrical psalm in public worship. He saw that human character is formed by the songs a people sing. A strict and blind adherence to the hymns of the Old Dispensation was putting back the clock of religion—rendering the joy of redemption through Christ as if it had never been.

Up to the middle years of last century Watts's evangelical *Psalms* were used in all the churches, here and over the Atlantic. This rebel in Psalmody had effected a revolution in the congregational praise of the English-speaking churches throughout the world. But he did not do this without meeting considerable opposition within and outside his own denomination. We have been reading recently the correspondence which passed between him and Thomas Bradbury, a London Independent minister of note, on the subject of Watts's *Psalms*. In it Bradbury accuses Watts of setting himself up as a rival to the sweet singer of Israel. There is a vein of cruelty and uncharitableness in Bradbury's letters. But, in keeping with his character where personalities were concerned, Watts never loses his temper in this correspondence with a fellow minister. He shows a spirit of tolerance and sweet reasonableness in the letter he writes to Bradbury, 24th January 1725:

You tell me that I rival my Psalter with David, whether he or I be the sweet psalmist of Israel. I abhor the thought; while yet at the same time I am fully persuaded that the Jewish Psalm book was never designed to be the *only* psalter for the Christian Church; and though we may borrow many parts of the prayers of Ezra, Job, and Daniel, as well as of David, yet if we take them entire as they stand, and join nothing of the Gospel, I think there are few of them will be found proper prayers for a *Christian Church*. I know no reason why the glorious discoveries of the New Testament should not be mingled with our songs and praises as well as with our prayers.

In no place does Watts display himself more manifestly as a reasonable rebel.

The opposition provoked by Watts's *Psalms* in the Anglican Church is represented by William Romaine's *Essay on Psalmody* (1775). Strange to say, though Romaine was greatly influenced by the Evangelical Revival, he remained a staunch conservative in his ideas about the kind of public praise legitimate in the worship of the Church. In 1775 he compiled *A Collection out of the Book of Psalms* in which he adheres to the canonical psalms and evangelizes their meaning, not in the text of the psalms themselves, but with prefatory notes. In the same year appeared his *Essay on Psalmody*. In this he speaks of Dr. Watts's 'flights of fancy'. He calls Watts's hymns Watts's *whims*. And he accuses Watts (as Bradbury had done) of preferring the insights of a poet to the inspiration of a prophet. But Romaine was now fighting a losing

battle: Watts had won the day and had set many other writers to the task of providing a more extensive *Christian Psalmody*.

The late Bernard Manning and Mr. V. de Sola Pinto have written admirably of the little-realized greatness of some of Watts's early lyrical verse. Pinto rightly, though perhaps too enthusiastically, refers to the originality of Watts as a metrist. We think Watts was not so much an original worker in this field as a reactionary, harking back to the metrical variety of Elizabethan and Caroline poetry. And indeed nearer his own time there was the example of Abraham Cowley and Dryden. At the same time, when most writers of verse were shackled by the heroic couplet, he, rebel as he was, followed the guidance of a more adventurous muse. What has been sadly overlooked by those who have written about this side of Watts's work is his daring criticism of the ancients—those Olympians who were the gods in the Augustan literary Pantheon—and whom it was sacrilege to question on the canons of art. Watts was never more convincingly a rebel than in this field of literary criticism. The classical example is in his *Improvement of the Mind*:<sup>1</sup>

It is the lyric ode which has shown to the world some of the happiest examples of this kind (he is speaking of the supremacy of lyrical poetry); and I cannot say but this part of poesy has been my favourite amusement above all others. And for this reason it is that *I have never thought the heroic poems, Greek, Latin, or English, which have obtained the highest fame in the world, are sufficiently diversified, exalted, or animated, for want of the interspersions of now and then an elegiac or lyric ode.* This might have been done with great and beautiful propriety where the poet has introduced a song at a feast or the joys of victory, or the soliloquies of divine satisfaction, or the pensive and despairing agonies of distressing sorrow. *Why should that which is called the most glorious form of poesy be bound down and confined to such a long and endless uniformity of measures, when it should kindle or melt the soul, swell or sink it into all the various and transporting changes of which human nature is capable. . . . I am greatly mistaken, if this wise mixture of numbers would not be a further reach of perfection than they have ever attained to without it: let it be remembered that it is not nature and strict reason, but weak and awful reverence for antiquity, and the vogue of fallible men, that has established those Greek and Roman writings as absolute and complete patterns.*

That is the real Watts in his intellectual prime, rebel in literary criticism as in almost everything else, the nonconformist of his age.

That last sentence, pruned of its particularity, may be regarded as the manifesto of Watts's work in Psalmody, Hymnology, Education, Literary Criticism, and Children's Praise: 'It is not nature and strict reason, but weak and awful reverence for antiquity [or custom], and the vogue of fallible men, that has established those . . . writings [or customs] as absolute and complete patterns.'

There is yet one department of Watts's work in his system of Church Praise with which we have not dealt. We refer to his songs for children. Even in this sphere his nonconformity is in evidence; for hardly any notice had been taken, up to Watts's day, of the spiritual and moral needs of the child. *Divine and Moral Songs for Children* was not primarily designed as a book of children's

<sup>1</sup> Part I, chap. 20, sect. 36.



praise, but it has proved to be a pioneer volume in the evolution of the children's hymn. It is easy to make fun of the verses in this little book. We feel as we read some of them, in these more enlightened days, that they must have been a very good substitute for the Bogey Man in the eighteenth-century nursery. They seem to have been penned for very naughty children who keep very bad company. For instance, writing presumably of the 'wicked' boys who poked fun of the prophet's bald pate, he says:

*God quickly stopped their wicked breath  
And sent two raging bears,  
That tore them limb from limb to death,  
With blood, and groans, and tears.*

That is all so very, very bad in the light of child psychology. Ay, yes, but a new movement has to begin somewhere, and it begins according to the light the age can offer. And that light was pretty dim when Watts turned to the child in the midst. The true memorial of Watts's work in the field of children's hymnody is not just his own provocative sheaf of verses, but the children's section in all the hymn-books of all the churches, not forgetting that almost perfect hymnal for little folks of today, *Child Songs* (edited by Carey Bonner).

It is almost certain that the hymnody of the English-speaking churches would have been considerably impoverished but for the divine discontent of Isaac Watts, the reasonable rebel of eighteenth-century Nonconformity.

HARRY ESCOTT

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## THE UNRESOLVED CONFLICT

### Reason and Belief

EDWARD HULME, in his book, *The Middle Ages*, offers this comment on two of the outstanding men of the period—Anselm and Abelard: 'Anselm said man should believe in order to understand, Abelard declared that he should understand in order to believe.' There, in a nutshell, is contained the unresolved conflict between reason and belief. While it must be admitted that both take over to themselves something of the other, the question of their primacy is always in conflict.

Abelard, who lived in the last quarter of the eleventh and the first quarter of the twelfth centuries, was, of course, a believer. But, to quote Hulme, 'He said the believer should be ready to give an account of his faith. What is to be defended must be understood. He relied upon reason.' Belief was not enough. And authority was not enough. Abelard could never belong to the group, which included Bernard of Clairvaux, that 'were requiring faith even though it were unsupported by reason'. With Bernard, at least, there was a definite and genuine mistrust of the human intellect. It will be recognized at once, therefore, that although members of many modern cults vigorously defend their religious tenets, and use reason in doing so, they do not give the same place or status to reason as did Abelard. This Middle Ages thinker argued that 'reason is just as divine a faculty as any other with which man is endowed . . . and that faith which is contrary to reason cannot proceed from God'. Even if, as it appears, he was opposed only to authority, it was the authority imposed by belief—whether or not that belief was reasonable. Hulme actually does point out that the only thing Abelard contested—for he was disposed to defend the doctrines of the Church—was compulsion, the demand for blind submission. But he has to admit that this implied 'the right of every man to use his own reason and come to his own conclusions'.

That the consequences of the adoption of this view should not only be far-reaching but largely revolutionary is not hard to imagine. Indeed, something of this was seen at the time. Where would this intellectual freedom lead? What was likely to happen if all men had the right of private judgement? Inevitably a conflict began—a conflict continued to this day—between the conservative and liberal elements within the Church. Abelard was eventually broken on the wheel of authority by the opposing believers, the leader of whom, ironically enough, was the saintly Bernard. But Abelard's ideas lived on. As Hulme points out, those who had listened to his lectures did not fail their master in the matter of advocacy. Unfortunately, however, forced by the Church from their natural habitation—which was the Church itself—those ideas gave rise to the beginnings of a rationalism which has disturbed Christendom ever since. Doubt and unbelief began to spread and, instead of a rejoicing in the arrival of a vitalizing quest for the reasonableness of the Faith, a disquieting rationalism, that resented the Church, was surely and vigorously born. Reason and belief were torn apart. Even the mystics, who may be said to have attempted a synthesis, failed to secure their reconciliation.

The best of them neither denied reason nor disregarded belief. They claimed there was an experience of reality that went beyond both. The gaining of wisdom and the receiving of illumination might be necessary, but the fullest and final reality was the spiritual sense within a man which gained God at first leap. Whether the union gained with God in that intoxicated and ecstatic leap has come to be regarded as, in the last resort, the abandonment of both reason and belief or the increasing materialistic and rationalistic pursuits of modern man have overlaid his spiritual sense, one thing is certain—mysticism has not provided a solution satisfying to the generality of the people.

So the conflict remains and the gulf between reason and belief tends to widen. Not only is this true of the acclaimed rationalists and apologists, it is also true of the general body of believers: there is a cleavage within the Church. It may be true that the modern Church holds less and less satisfaction for those who, like Bernard, 'require faith even though it were unsupported by reason', but it still has a place—a large one—for those who, with Anselm, demand that men shall 'believe in order to understand'. On the other hand, while in the twelfth century rationalism became a bastard, it still succeeds, from time to time, in bringing to birth lusty progenitors within the cradle of the Church. Of course, they are not altogether welcome, being treated more like illegitimates who bring not a little disgrace upon the family. When they grow up, they feel tolerated rather than welcome. We do not break our Abelards now. Rather, we give them the sense that they do not belong. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, that the children of the bastard sometimes scream and occasionally become rather naughty.

Just as the conflict between reason and belief begins with the question of primacy, it is as surely sustained by the problem of authority. If reason and belief are always in conflict so are freedom and authority, for the same issues are at stake. Advocates of the claims of reason always tend to fight for freedom. Those who plead the cause of belief almost always, in the last resort, take their stand for authority. Each side blames the other for the gulf created and each regards the other as responsible for the decline of faith. There are, of course, those who ask for a little reason plus a little belief or a little belief plus a little reason; and naïvely imagine that, in so doing, they have resolved the conflict. That is a radical mistake. Reason and belief, freedom and authority, must be taken, in each case, as a way of life. We either accept the primacy of reason or of belief, the necessity and desirability of freedom or of authority; or we become the ineffective compromiser. And it can be taken for granted that the compromiser of one generation becomes the conservative of the next. In this connexion it is well to recall that Dean Inge has described the Church as the most conservative institution in the world. The question to be asked, then, is—What are the respective merits of reason and belief?

Schweitzer once said that Christianity is 'an illogical religion'. This does not mean that it is irrational or unreasonable. It means that it is not based on reason and is not dependent on logic for its genius. Christianity is a faith. Logic might make it competent, but faith made and makes it victorious. Schweitzer was right. It must be acknowledged that not only Christianity, but everything else—life itself—is based on faith. 'We live by faith, not by sight.' But even faith has to be reasonable in order to be established. Belief,

when justifiable, is the outcome of a reasonable faith. If Abelard did not see all the implications of his position—that a man must understand in order to believe, neither did Anselm in saying that men should believe in order to understand. Believe what? Surely not anything! Believe that which is accepted by the Church? That is authority. Believe that which is right and true? That demands reason. No wonder neither Anselm nor the Church was able to stem the incoming tide of rationalism. Even Anselm himself was caught by Abelard's wave.

Sooner or later, the rock on which the waves of rationalism and belief fling themselves and break apart is found to be the problem of authority. Dostoevski was quite right when he said that man was afraid of freedom. He is—and that is why he is afraid of reason. Especially is this true within the Church. Yet as Dr. A. B. D. Alexander said in his *Thinkers of the Church*: 'It has frequently been observed that in those periods of history and phases of religious experience in which the intellectual side of Christianity has been disparaged, and the main stress has been laid upon emotional and sensuous expression, or even practical effort, the Church has failed to retain its hold upon the higher life of man and has largely ceased to be a living force in the spiritual development of the world. Christianity is the expression of the Mind of God, and our Faith in the fullest sense is a rational religion, appealing to the human mind and calling forth the highest energies of man's spiritual being.'

Reason is as necessary as faith and is the forerunner of belief. Indeed, there can be no belief without reason. Without reason, as without works, even faith itself is dead. Reason supplies the necessary justification of our faith and is always the test of our belief. If reason is denied primacy and fails to be honoured for its discriminating, vitalizing, and enlightening power, belief, bereft of revival and resilience, becomes the bulwark of authority. In this way religion becomes anti-intellectual, and heresy-hunting tendencies, even though often refined, begin to appear. There may well be truth as well as warning in Hulme's words: 'If the predominant religion of our own time . . . has a future, it belongs not to its dogmas, but to its heresies, to the thought of great souls who, instead of receiving it passively, have wrestled for themselves with spiritual problems and have passed through the anguish of perplexity and the fire of persecution.' Here he has the support of Dr. Alexander, who says: 'It often happens that the Church owes not least to thinkers who, by their very loyalty to truth as they saw it, have been deemed heretics in their time; but who in later days have been acclaimed as teachers sent from God.'

All this, if needing a little qualification, is largely true. Belief, without the continuous refreshment and releasing power of reason, hardens into authority: the very reason it requires for its life and verve is regarded as rebellion. And here begins a disagreement which is fortunate when it does not degenerate into denouncement. Belief would make for uniformity, reason for disunity. It is reason, the believer sees clearly, that challenges and undermines authority; and, because of this, it must not only be regarded as insufficient for religion, but as a disintegrating force in religious life. Beginning with this judgement, believers feel that they, and they alone, begin in the right place—with God. Faith makes its approach from God to man; reason, from man to God. It is

this that leads the believer to say that God, not man, makes the first move. Man cannot reach God unless God first reaches down to man. It is faith that says this; and it cannot, it is suggested, be said by reason.

Here is an important point which, unless put into right perspective, will throw everything else out of focus. Both sides in this contest can and do agree—if they are believers—that, for all adequate and ultimate explanations of life, a beginning must be made with the fact of God. Yet even this fact, paradoxically, depends upon faith. The fact of God is not axiomatic. Neither can it admit of proof. It would appear, therefore, that if religion had to depend on the satisfying of reason, it would be as justifiable, and as natural, to begin with the fact of man as with the fact of God. Reason, it is inferred, leads to a naturalistic approach to religion. And here is its inadequacy. Religion is supernatural and demands faith as its basic requirement. Reason, by a sort of inescapable determinism, makes man its centre rather than God. It is faith that reaches God, not reason. Thus, in the end, the conflict of reason and belief is not only the battle of freedom and authority but, it is assumed, a contest between a naturalistic and supernatural approach to religion. Belief depends upon faith, not upon reason.

This position, however, leaves one important question unanswered. How is belief gained? It is not something given. Men must achieve belief as certainly as they achieve divinity. Neither can be had without knowledge and understanding. Even accepting the view that the last word is with faith, unaided by reason it swiftly becomes folly. That is why a religion without a theology is little better than magic. It is, therefore, no use saying to anyone, 'You must believe' or 'You ought to believe'. That is too much like saying to a neurotic, 'You ought not to worry' or 'You must not be fretful'. The neurotic knows that perfectly well himself. What he wants to know is how not to worry and how not to be fretful. Nor is it sufficient, though it is better, to say what ought to be believed. That is like presenting a child with a problem in mathematics, but providing no clue to its solution. It is good neither to impose belief nor to dictate it. And even to say, 'Accept this, then something else will follow; do this, then something else will ensue', though a perfectly justifiable exercise in deduction, still appears to imply the preliminary requirement of faith—faith in the soundness, even the reasonableness, of the declaration made and in the conclusion it promulgates. Even so, in such a claim, no one can fail to realize that the emphasis has been changed. Faith now is because of, and grows out of, the fact. No longer does the fact grow out of the faith. Thus there is a return to the naturalistic rather than the supernatural approach. The doing leads to the knowing, and the knowing creates the condition of belief.

It must not be thought, of course, that here we have the old controversy of the practical versus the theoretical, action versus thought, the actual versus the ideal. That would make nonsense of the whole problem. Theory is as vital as practice and practice as theory: they both involve doing. And the ideal is as necessary as the actual. That is why it is argument to no purpose when realism is opposed to idealism and vice versa. What needs to be realized is that knowledge of God, and an awareness of the nature and reality of religion, can best be come by when we see something of what God is. That



involves reason and would appear fully to justify Abelard's dictum that we must understand in order to believe. Belief that is not based on understanding is an unreasoning and unreasonable faith.

The great fear in religion, whenever the claims of reason are voiced, is that of intellectualism; or, if not fear, the sense that it sets up a detached and, therefore, a non-vital approach. This latter position appears to be that of the Danish writer, Kierkegaard, who argued that the real experience of God and religion came through action—a doing that, in one way or another, involved suffering. Depending all the time upon reason, he ultimately rejects it as the real approach. But he does so in a curious way. Partly, even largely, it is due to his view that the irrational—not the rational—is the deciding factor in man. But also partly because the intellectual approach does not, and cannot, give the stimulus to action that can come by way of the emotions and will. In religion, reason makes travesty of the real thing and is even a menace to it.

There is much to be said for this position. But the judgement may be hazarded that it is in some measure due to Kierkegaard's failure to see life as a unity and his weakness of being constantly drawn to the pin-point of his own experiences—a crustacean, caught in the shell of the individualism of his day and unable to break free to understand the implications of the wide world of thought that always impinges on the Christian faith. Whenever personal experience becomes the criterion of judgement, it is inevitable that action—the specific act—should be emphasized. But life is affected by more than just action: it is affected by thought. And if thought, unrelated to act, is regarded as mere theorizing; act, unrelated to thought, is mere fumbling. In actual fact, however, neither takes place without the other. Thinking, as well as acting, is doing. What needs to be seen is that reason—sometimes within the orbit of religion and sometimes outside it—is as vital as belief because it leads to conversion. And it becomes much more important than imposed or passively accepted belief because it leads to the right sort of conversion. Reason may be a long-term policy, but it is safer and surer than mere belief. The real need therefore, now as always, is a strong, if slow, irresistible pressure of right thinking upon men. In the long run, it is reason that converts—that rightly converts. Emotion may lead to decision, but not to conversion.

It would be foolish, of course, to oppose thought to action and action to thought. As it has been pointed out: 'Religion undoubtedly fails . . . if it does not find expression in conduct.' Nevertheless, while agreeing that it would be futile 'to discuss whether the Church owes more to her thinkers or to her practical workers', Dr. Alexander makes clear that 'while the Church cannot exist apart from the living and personal testimony of her members, she can as little maintain the vitality and fullness of her spiritual life if she minimizes or discourages the intelligent consideration of the truths upon which her very faith depends . . .'. Action, therefore, need not be put over against thought nor thought against action. If it be true that there is such a thing as thoughtless action, it is also true that there is such a condition as might be described as actionless thought. But when we speak of reason, we usually have additional things in mind. In stressing the primacy of reason, neither action nor belief need be minimized. On the contrary, by making such a stress, some guarantee will be given that action will not be thoughtless nor belief unintelligent.

An intellectualism that is concerned with truth can never be altogether detached. Moreover, if it is wrong to be too detached in our thinking, it is also wrong to be too attached by our emotions. If, in the former, thought stands in the way of action, in the latter, emotion gets in the way of thought. The wise way, as A. E. Taylor pointed out in his *Faith of a Moralist*, is a combination of the detached and attached attitude to whatever we seek to live by. Yet always, in the interests of accuracy, the leaning must be toward detachment.

At this point, we must seek to assess the wider implications of reason. The orthodox believer sees that an intellectual estimate may be given to religious doctrine without in any way affecting, religiously, the life of the one engaged in the exercise. A man may give intellectual assent to a belief in God without himself being affected by the belief. This is the orthodox believer's main difficulty. But it must be remembered that, say, Christianity is not merely an individualistic or individual affair. To quote Dr. Alexander again: 'It is not enough that the Christian Faith should be the private concern of individuals. It must make its appeal to the universal consciousness. . . .' Moreover, who will say that the individual Christian life, however good, makes in the long run a greater contribution to the good of the world than accurate thinking? It must be agreed that it is better to have them in combination, but it is not convincing to say that a man's actions are of more importance than his thoughts.

Reason begins in a concern for accuracy. That concern, wherever it is applied, becomes the fundamental value for life. Accuracy is the attempt to get things right. And that is where we must begin. It is this concern to get things right that leads on—if not with one thing, with another; and if not with one man, with someone else—to the higher standards of life. And if it be the fact that that which is not ethically sound cannot be religiously true, the advocate of reason, beginning with a concern for accuracy, inevitably takes men and the world on the way to God. It can justifiably be said, therefore, that the student of mathematics, the professor of languages, the doctor of philosophy participate, in their different pursuits, in the divine plan of God as certainly as any believer. The difference is one of personal relationship and not of pertinency. Nothing can be so fictitious as a religion that has little or no concern for reason, for where the desire for accuracy is absent the way of the worshipper can be a complete denial of the nature of the one worshipped.

In making this plain, we come to the final thing that needs to be said. Whatever may have been the truth of things a hundred years ago, it is different now. It may not be necessary to accept Ibsen's view that after twenty years the truth begins to stink, but it is necessary to recognize that, generation after generation, the nexus between religion and the world inevitably changes. Whatever may have been true yesterday, today reason is the divine instrument in the gaining of that sort of religion which alone can meet and grapple with a collectivist society, a society which is slowly but surely leading on to a world sovereignty. Not only so, it is the most necessary requirement to deal with the aftermath of the rationalist, humanist, and scientific warfare. The chief need of our day is to convert the mind of man,

not his heart. Even the instinctive, non-rational part of man does not act, paradoxical as it may seem, without ideas, ideas false in the sense of being unreasoning and unreasonable. The world is always suffering from false ideas and in this country, it may be said, they are more a cause of irreligion than strong impulses. Dr. Eric Waterhouse is right—the main task of the Church today is with the mind of man. The schoolmistress in Winifred Holtby's novel, *South Riding*, said her job was 'to turn giggling girls into sensible women'. The task of the Church is not dissimilar. People who are content with the comfort of unconsidered belief must be turned into advocates of the worth and importance of reason in the quest for a true faith—advocates who are concerned for the accuracy of things.

The flight from reason is to be deplored because any such tendency dries up the vitality of the faith and brings the believer first to plead for uniformity and finally to assert authority. For this reason, it is not sufficient to declare: 'The Bible says this, therefore believe.' It is necessary to know why it says it, who said it, in what way it applies to our age and time; and whether, in the light of other thought and discovery, what the Bible says is not only reasonable but justifiable. Nor, for the very same reason, is it sufficient to say that men should, or must, believe in God, or that they need to be saved, or that they require religion. The question is—why? Just as long as men fail to understand, so long will they fail to believe and do in the right way. The Bible contains the supreme revelation of God and God's way with men, and it must be treated as a revelation. But that does not mean that God cannot be found in the world, in nature, in men, in movements, in discoveries, and in history. Nor yet that anyone who, in any branch of thought, seeks the truth is out of relation with God and religion. If the Bible as such comes to be regarded as our final authority—and about finalities John Oman uttered a permanent warning—there will always be the danger of Christians becoming as exclusive as the advocates of the Jewish religion. The Bible may be the highest truth about God, but it is not the exclusive truth about man and life. For this reason, it is dangerous to accept the authoritarian position of, say, Franz Hildebrandt. It is necessary to see that the contribution made by science, philosophy, poetry, art, psychology, and the various emphases of thought in the movements of men are the filling out of the truth which, in its turn, makes ever clearer the revelation the Bible contains. And this requires reason. Professor C. H. Dodd has wisely pointed out that 'If the Bible is indeed "the Word of God" it is not so as the "last word" on all religious questions, but as the "seminal word" out of which new apprehension of truth springs in the mind of man.' For that reason, it is not at all sufficient to say that something is self-evident or true because it is 'in the Bible'. As Dodd says: 'We must take responsibility for our beliefs.'

Reason and belief are still in conflict. Maybe one day a fitting synthesis will be found. Meanwhile, let the orthodox and liberal elements within the Church pursue their way without either being censorious toward the other.

THOMAS W. BEVAN

## Notes and Discussions

### RECENT CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE CONTINENT TO NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

IT IS SELDOM in these days that one can secure a book published in Germany, but a hearty welcome is due to the seventh and completely revised edition of Debrunner's adaptation of Blass's *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*. The paper, alas, is not so good as that used in the sixth edition of 1931, but the substitution of roman for gothic type is an advantage. In that beautifully photographed edition there were thirty-two pages of *addenda et corrigenda*. As the whole book had to be reset a new method has been adopted. To keep down the cost of production and offer the book at a comparatively low price the editor has resorted to a drastic method of abbreviation, and has divided the work into two parts, the main part (followed immediately by the index of the whole) giving the grammatical outline and more important references and examples, and the second part supplying the more erudite matter. It is an indication of the gulf that separates German pastors from their English, and still more from their American, brethren that Professor Debrunner deprecates the notion that the learned appendix is only of use to specialists and has no value for ministers and theological students! It is typical of the care shown to bring all recent material into use that readings from the Chester Beatty papyri are inserted throughout. Debrunner's book has long been recognized universally as the most complete and most competent Grammar of New Testament Greek in existence. The new edition makes that judgement even more indisputable. (Göttingen, 1943.)

From Scandinavia a few books have come to hand. One of the members of Professor A. Fridrichsen's seminar, Bo Reicke, has written a book in English, which is published at Copenhagen, *The Disobedient Spirits and Christian Baptism* (Ejnar Munksgaard, 1946). Dr. Reicke has given us a most learned monograph—a study of 1 Peter 3<sup>18</sup> and its context. In its amplitude and range of knowledge it recalls J. B. Mayor's famous commentary on the Epistle of James. Certainly no future commentator on 1 Peter can afford to neglect this treasury of knowledge. Professor Fridrichsen himself has contributed in German some valuable notes, *Sprachliches und Stilistisches zum Neuen Testament* (Uppsala, Almqvist & Wiksell, 1943), and in French a note on 1 Clement 5, *Propter Invidiam* (Gothenburg, 1946). Hans-Joachim Schoeps writes on *Die jüdischen Prophetenmorde* with special reference to Matthew 23<sup>35</sup> and Hebrews 11<sup>35-9</sup> (Uppsala, 1943). Professor W. G. Kümmel, of Zürich, writes for the series '*Coniectanea Neotestamentica*' in German an essay on the important subject, *Mythische Rede und Heilsgeschehen im Neuen Testament* (Lund, 1947). How far does the element of 'myth' enter into the setting in which we find the divine message presented to us in the New Testament, as it certainly plays a considerable part in the language of the Old? To what extent has this element coloured the apocalyptic parts of the New Testament, and how far can we remove this element without destroying the essence of the Christian

Gospel? Kümmel had in mind Bultmann's essay on the New Testament and Mythology. This stimulating contribution reminds us of another recent pamphlet by Professor W. G. Kümmel, *Das Bild des Menschen im Neuen Testament* (Zwingli-Verlag, Zürich, 1948). Indeed, Switzerland is very much alive in its contributions to biblical and theological studies just now. This essay, dedicated to Professor Walter Bauer on his seventieth birthday, is an attempt to discover what is the New Testament doctrine of human nature, as upon our answer to this question must depend our understanding of the form that man's salvation is to take, and how man can be brought into the enjoyment of this salvation. After a statement of the problem the inquiry follows in turn the evidence of the Synoptic Gospels, the Pauline writings, the Johannine theology and the remaining books of the New Testament. All the relevant passages in the Synoptics, in Paul and in the Johannine Gospel and Epistles are closely scrutinized. The differences are indicated but shown to belong rather to details and to modes of expression. Jesus, we are told, developed no new doctrine of man, but assumed a very clear picture of human nature as the background of his Gospel. Man is a creature, the crown of creation, but has ignored his creaturely dependence on God and has proudly relied upon himself, and broken the divine commands. Jesus does not teach the natural title to divine sonship in man, but in his proclamation of the kingdom of God sets forth that sonship as what man ought to become. This state of sonship is the eschatological purpose of God's redemptive action, by which man is brought into a new historical situation, with fresh possibilities which open up the way for deliverance. Paul employs a theology influenced by rabbinic and hellenistic metaphors and modes of thought, but is essentially in agreement with our Lord's representation of the nature of man. For Paul, salvation is not a redemption that comes from the operation of natural causes, but is an act of God on the plane of history which signifies the beginning of a new age, and transports men into the kingdom of God's beloved Son. The Johannine doctrine receives full and effective treatment, and it is shown that it contains no metaphysical dualism which would separate man and God. Man's situation in the 'world' occasions, but does not necessitate, a separation from God. Just as in Paul the 'flesh' is the base of operation for sin, but not inherently sinful, so Jesus can pray for his disciples, not that they should be taken out of the world, but that they should be kept from its evil. John, in his use of a terminology partly derived from gnostic dualism, can easily be misunderstood. But his description of human nature is not an *a priori* loan from hellenistic ideas. Rather is it based upon the experience of God's action in history in the mission of His Son. The only two passages in the New Testament which Kümmel regards as falling outside the unitary teaching about the nature of man in relation to God, are Paul's quotation from Aratus before the Areopagus and 2 Peter 1<sup>4</sup>.

The situation made and protracted by the war accounts for the delay in noticing some books which are not new. Wilhelm Oehler's brochure on the missionary character of the Fourth Gospel (*Zum Missionscharakter des Johannesevangeliums*—Verlag C. Bertelsmann, Gütersloh, 1941) recalls by its title Bornhäuser's book of twenty years ago, *Das Johannesevangelium eine Missionschrift für Israel*. But Oehler follows a different line, arguing that the author



wrote most of the Gospel with the deliberate aim of winning gentile converts to the Christian faith, but he also finds in certain parts of the Gospel (notably 15-17) a treatment which suggests that the same author is handling material intended for the edification of those who were already in the Church, thus resembling the contents of the First Epistle of St. John. He regards the sections containing debates between Jesus and the 'Jews' as polemical aids to those engaged in the discussions between Church and Synagogue. The book has much useful discussion of important terms in the Johannine teaching, and refers continually to recent literature on the subject.

Two books written in French are devoted to topics very much to the fore at the present time. Oscar Cullmann writes a scholarly essay, *Le Baptême des enfants et la doctrine biblique du baptême* (Neuchâtel et Paris, Delachaux and Niestlé, 1948). Written by Barth's New Testament colleague at Basle it is a friendly but searching reply to Karl Barth's characteristically dogmatic denial of the New Testament warrant for infant baptism. After a full investigation of the questions at issue the conclusions reached are: The New Testament undoubtedly attests the baptism of adult Jews and heathen who had been converted to Christ. The practice of infant baptism, on the contrary, is attested quite indirectly by a few traces. Paedo-baptism, however, is perfectly consistent with the scripture *doctrine* of baptism. (1) By His death and resurrection, and independently of men, Christ has accomplished, for them all, *a general baptism*. (2) By the act, quite as sovereign, of ecclesiastical baptism, God sets the one who has been baptized within the Christian community, *admits him to the body of Christ*, making him share in a special way in the unique redemptive event accomplished on the Cross. (3) Faith is only decisive so far as it is a human *response* to this grace of God. (4) Essentially baptism is the fulfilment of Jewish circumcision and the proselyte baptism to which it is related. With regard to the relation of faith to baptism, Cullmann sums up the position under these three heads: (a) *After* baptism, faith is required of *all* who have been baptized. (b) *Before* baptism, confession of faith is demanded of *adults* who come one by one from Judaism or heathendom. It is a sign of the divine will and proves to the Church that it can proceed to baptism. (c) *During* baptism faith is required from the *congregation* in prayer. An important appendix deals with traces of an old baptismal formula in the New Testament.

The other book, *Le Sacrement de la Sainte Cène*, written by Franz-J. Leenhardt, Professor in the University of Geneva (Delachaux and Niestlé, 1948), is a very full treatment of some of the problems which have to be faced by every student of eucharistic origins. Such questions are: Was the Last Supper a paschal meal? Can the varying accounts of the Last Supper be reconciled? Which form of the text in Luke is original? What is the true significance of the eucharistic teaching in St. John? Can it be said that Jesus instituted the Eucharist as a rite to be repeated? What did the author of the Acts mean by 'the breaking of bread'? All these and other aspects of the subject are discussed with learning and freshness of treatment in this important book. The publishers are rendering a great service by the two series which they are producing, '*Cahiers Théologiques de l'Actualité Protestante*', and '*Série Théologiques de l'Actualité Protestante*'. An important addition to the former series is an

admirable survey by an honorary Professor at the University of Lausanne and Professor at the University of Neuchâtel, Philippe-H. Menoud, entitled *L'Évangile de Jean d'après les recherches récentes*'.

WILBERT F. HOWARD

## SIXTY YEARS AGO

### Robert Louis Stevenson's Cruise on the *Casco* from San Francisco to Honolulu

TO ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON life was ever full of interest and enjoyment and thrill. It may be doubted whether, for interest or enjoyment or thrill, any period in his life excelled the seven-month yachting cruise in the South Seas which was his good fortune sixty years ago, ending toward the close of January 1889. The very contemplation of this cruise put him on the tip-toe of expectation. 'This is an old dream of mine which actually seems to be coming true,' he wrote to a correspondent. 'You can conceive what a state of excitement we are in. From poking in a sick-room all winter to the deck of one's own ship is indeed a heavenly change.'

In August 1887, on urgent medical advice, R.L.S. had given up his home in Bournemouth. Arriving at New York in the following month, he went on, at the beginning of October, to the Adirondack mountains, close to the Canadian border, to live in a house known as Baker's Cottage, on Saranac Lake. He loved the surrounding country as it reminded him of the Highlands of Scotland. The temperature was occasionally nearly thirty degrees below zero. Here the family remained until the middle of April, but Stevenson's health showed no definite improvement, and as a last resort (a kind of 'kill or cure') an extended cruise in the South Seas was decided upon. At San Francisco his wife came across a suitable yacht, named the *Casco*, and this was chartered and fitted for a seven-month cruise.

The *Casco* was ninety-five feet in length and was of seventy-four tons burden. She had lofty masts and, built on the most graceful lines, 'sat on the water like a bird'. Louis fell in love with her as soon as he set eyes upon her. At dawn on 28th June the passengers—R.L.S., his wife, his mother, and his stepson, with their French maid, Valentine Roch—were towed through the Golden Gate, and thenceforth America, no more than Europe, was never to see him again. From the days of his boyhood it had been the desire of his heart to see the islands of the Pacific. When at last this became his good fortune he tells us that for nearly ten years his health had been declining, and for some while before he set forth upon this adventurous cruise he believed he had 'come to the after-piece of life and had only the nurse and the undertaker to expect'. Not one of the party had ever set foot on any of the South Sea islands or knew one word of the tongues of the islanders.

After discussion it had been decided to set out straight for the Marquesas,

a group of islands lying three thousand miles almost due west of San Francisco, and for more than three weeks the *Casco* sailed across the Pacific with no land in sight. As the result of the warmer climate and the sea air Louis grew stronger every day. It is stated that in the first twenty-four hours the vessel covered two hundred and fifty-six miles. On board ship Stevenson rose early daily and did a good bit of literary work. Later in the day he would give time to conversation and to practising on the flute.

At last they reached Nukahiva, where in Anaho Bay the songs of birds and the bleatings of lambs were heard, and the scent of many tropical fruits and flowers greeted their nostrils. The magic effect of this first island landfall on his mind he has described in the first chapter of *In the South Seas*. 'The climate is delightful', he writes, 'and the harbour where we lie is one of the loveliest spots imaginable.' Already he had become conscious of unaccustomed vitality and began to feel himself physically a new man.

Fakarava, the capital of the group, was visited and at the end of September they sailed for Tahiti, one of the most beautiful islands in all the South Seas. From Papeete in Tahiti they moved on to Tautira in the same island, where they stayed for two months, in the home of the chief Ori-a-Ori, while the *Casco* was being repaired. 'Tautira', wrote Louis, 'is one of the most beautiful spots, and its people the most amiable, I have ever found; besides which the climate has suited me down to the ground.' His wife Fanny was even more enthusiastic. 'I write to you from fairyland, where we are living in a fairy story. Lou has gained health and strength every day.'

The cruise was by no means without its risks and its dangers. In the waters of the Dangerous Archipelago, for example, in the midst of invisible islands and rapid and variable currents, the voyagers were in complete ignorance of where they were for one whole night and half the next day. But the perils of the deep were all part of the programme.

One outstanding happening was the occasion when Louis's mother gave a feast on board the *Casco* to some of the women of Tautira. One old lady prayed that if anything was wrong with the masts it might be discovered in time. To indicate his own faith that the masts were all they should be, the captain struck them a mighty blow with his own right hand. To his amazement and horror, they collapsed, having lost their substance through dry rot. Had either of the masts previously gone by the board, nothing could have saved the vessel.

On Christmas Day the voyage to the Sandwich Islands was resumed, Honolulu being reached on 24th January. Soon afterwards R.L.S. wrote to Charles Baxter: 'The cruise has been a great success both as to matter, fun, and health. I am so well that I do not know myself.' To another correspondent he wrote: 'I have got health to a wonderful extent. I never knew the world was so amusing.'

The writing of *The Master of Ballantrae* is closely associated with the story of this seven-month cruise in the South Seas. It was while he was pacing up and down the veranda of the Saranac cottage one dark, clear night, with the thermometer below zero, that the idea for *The Master of Ballantrae* came to him. Gradually it took shape in his mind and the outline of the story lay clear before him. He made a good beginning while at Baker's Cottage, and

turned to it again during the enforced stay at Tautira. On his arrival at Honolulu he had to settle down seriously to put the finishing touches to the book. This, he declared, was the hardest job he had ever found to do. But in May he was able to write: 'I have at length finished *The Master*: now he is buried; his body under hatches; his soul, if there is a hell to go to, gone to hell; and I forgive him.'

It was from Honolulu at this time that he made his memorable visit to the settlement at Molokai, where Father Damien had been at work among the lepers, and where sights were seen that could not be described and stories heard that could not be repeated.

The twelve months from June 1888 proved so beneficial to his health that in June 1889 he left Honolulu on the trade schooner *The Equator*, bound for the Gilbert Islands, and by December he had reached the port of Apia, on the island of Upolu, in the Samoan group. He had projected returning to Europe, to make a new home at Madeira, but his South Sea wanderings had so benefited his health that he finally decided to settle for good in Samoa.

Some charming references to the cruise on the *Casco* are to be found in a volume of letters entitled *From Saranac to the Marquesas*, written by Stevenson's mother and published by Methuen in 1903. The eccentric millionaire owner of the yacht, when he learned that Louis was planning to take his mother with him, insisted on seeing that mother before he would allow the vessel to begin her cruise. While on board the *Casco* at Anoha Bay, Mrs. Stevenson wrote to Alison Cunningham (Louis's old nurse): 'Here there are birds very like our own blackies singing in the trees. If it were not for the groves of coconut palms we might almost fancy ourselves in our own dear land. The climate is simply perfect. Yesterday I climbed a hill as high as Caer Ketton and was not in the least over-tired. I doubt whether I could do that at home. Louis is looking so well, and has even got a little fatter! He sends you his love, and bids me tell you he is just living over again all the books you used to read to him.'

In 1897, in the Plaza at San Francisco, the city where R.L.S. and Mrs. Osbourne were married, a fountain was erected in memory of Louis's associations with the place. On the top of a granite shaft, thirteen feet high, was placed, executed in bronze, a sixteenth-century galleon in full sail, an emblem of Stevenson's wandering and romantic tastes. Incised on the granite shaft are a few sentences from *A Christmas Sermon*, beginning: 'To be honest, to be kind.'

Almost every house in which R.L.S. lived in America has now gone. In 1944, to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of his passing, four hundred acres of land surrounding the house in which he wrote *The Silverado Squatters* were acquired for the State of California. This is now named the Robert Louis Stevenson Memorial Park.

HENRY J. COWELL

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## Recent Literature

*Israel: Its Life and Culture, III-IV*, by Johs. Pedersen. (Oxford University Press, 45s.)

This book was first published in English in 1940, and the present ('Fotoprint') impression last year. It is a volume of close on 800 pages, whose writer is Professor of Semitic Philology in the University of Copenhagen. The first volume of this massive work has established itself as one of the most important Old Testament studies of the present century. While it dealt with 'the Soul, its Powers and Capacity' and the 'Common Life and Laws' of the Hebrews, the present volume has to do with 'Holiness'. The general title of Part III is 'Holiness and its Upholders', and its chapters are on War, Chieftain and King, the Prophet, the Priest, Holy Places and Holy Things, Sacred and Profane. Part IV, 'The Renewal and the Source of Holiness', deals mainly with Sacrifices, Feasts, and Sacred Customs. This volume is easier reading than the first, largely because the subject matter of the first necessitated psychological treatment. Here the style is more straightforward and descriptive. In fact, it is so easy and interesting—perhaps even prolix—that the reader may find himself wondering whether there is much in it that is new. But if he will carefully re-read any section, he will discover that Professor Pedersen's analysis is extraordinarily penetrating, and that he sheds new light on much that has usually been taken for granted—for example, in the comparisons and contrasts he draws between the kingship as exercised by Saul and David. Professor Pedersen is a good deal in sympathy with the so-called Uppsala school, his main objection to it being that its members advertise themselves as a 'school'. Like them he has moved away from what he believes to be the too rigid documentary analysis of Wellhausen and his followers. For example, he believes that the 'Passover Complex' of Exodus 1-15 is unanalysable. There are fundamentalists who would like to claim him as an ally; but if Pedersen finds it difficult to date the ancient materials exactly, that is not to say that he would put them early. His conclusion about Deuteronomy is that 'even if Deuteronomy were completed in the seventh century, it is not until after the Exile that it acquires importance'. But what he is chiefly interested in is the religion and life of ancient Israel, and in this field he has few rivals.

CHRISTOPHER R. NORTH

*How came Our Faith? A Study of the Religion of Israel and Its Significance for the Modern World*, by W. A. L. Elmslie. (Cambridge University Press, 21s.)

The Principal of Westminster College, Cambridge, is widely known for his stimulating presentation of the message of the Old Testament, both in the lecture room and in broadcast talks; and the publication of a substantial work by him on Old Testament religion is a welcome event. The book is addressed both to the general reader and to the serious student, and therefore contains more scholarly detail than a popular exposition and more practical application than a text-book. Part I raises the question of the relevance of the Old Testament to modern life, surveys the main contributions of modern scholarship to its study, describes its literary characteristics, and outlines the various stages (typological, allegorical, etc.) through which interpretation has passed. Part II is a brief account of history and popular religion up to the Exile. Part III, the most important part of the book, is a discussion of the contributions to Old Testament religion of eight outstanding men of God. The first great figure is Moses, who taught the Hebrews (already worshippers of *Ya*, the moon god) to say '*Ya-hweh-immanu*', '*Ya*, be with us': hence the divine Name *Jahveh*, hence *Immanuel* (which Dr. Elmslie regards as a Mosaic slogan), and hence Amos 5<sup>14</sup> (though the use



there of a different Hebrew preposition is not mentioned). The compassionate character of this God was already demonstrated in the deliverance from Egypt, and is reflected in those parts of the Torah which Dr. Elmslie regards as Mosaic. He next discusses the teaching of Samuel (conscience), Elijah (reason), Amos (mercy—a refreshing reminder of the nature of Old Testament justice), Hosea (love), Isaiah (the eternal in the temporal), Jeremiah (God and the individual), Deutero-Isaiah (God and the nations). The treatment is fresh and interesting, sometimes arrestingly so; and where the reader does not agree with Dr. Elmslie he will often be driven to reconsider his own assumptions. But gratitude for the merits of the book makes one the more keenly aware of defects which are of greater importance than the occasional slips and inaccuracies which the careful reader will detect. Dr. Elmslie often writes dignified and even moving English, but he sometimes lapses into colloquialisms which are out of place in a serious discussion. The reader who has spent a guinea on a 400-page book presumably does not need to have his interest captured or retained in this way. Reference to modern events and conditions is overdone. Does calling the prophetic mantle a 'utility overcoat' or describing the murderer of Gedaliah as 'a Zionist' really enlighten the modern reader? Perhaps 'he that believeth' in the abiding truth of the Prophets' message will 'not make haste' to find modern parallels. Sometimes, too, the imagination is allowed a liberty almost amounting to licence. While Dr. Elmslie's story of Amos and Simeon gives point to his account of the prophet's teaching, an expositor is on safer ground when he does not read too much 'between the lines', but says simply and clearly what they mean. Modern imaginative reconstruction can be nearly as arbitrary as Alexandrian allegory. The author's doubts about the unity of *Ezekiel* have prevented him from giving an account of the message of that book; and, apart from the chapter on Deutero-Isaiah (in which Torrey is closely followed), nothing is said about the post-exilic period. This is intentional, but even within his chosen limits Dr. Elmslie's treatment of his theme leaves an impression of incompleteness which is only partly removed by the summary statement in the last two chapters.

GEORGE W. ANDERSON

*The Religion of Maturity*, by John Wick Bowman. (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, \$3.) In *The Intention of Jesus*, a book which was well received when published in 1945, Professor J. W. Bowman, of the Western Theological Seminary, Pittsburg, examined the true cultural background of Jesus and the question whether the Church's representation of Him as the Suffering Servant, Messiah of the prophets, was according to the 'mind of Christ' Himself. In this new book the Professor takes up the same question in an essay in Biblical theology. For this he is eminently equipped by his wide scholarship, his experience for many years as a teacher in India and in America, and his independence of judgement. He begins with the thesis that in the Old Testament we have an objective revelation of God through the prophets. The concepts are God's sovereignty, His righteousness, His demand on men. Dr. Bowman claims that the thought of Jesus was steeped in the prophets, as is shown in His emphasis on the unity of theology and ethics, and in His intentional fulfilment of the prophetic concepts of the Messiah and the Suffering Servant. It was Jesus (not the Church in the first instance) who selected the prophetic concepts to define His person and His mission. The revelation of God calls for a response on man's part. Within Judaism the first religious response to the prophetic revelation was that of the priest, with his insistence on ritual and sacrifice for man's salvation, and on the importance of the temple. Dr. Bowman sums up his discussion of the attitude of Jesus to this 'religion of the altar' by saying that His self-sacrifice did not follow the way of the Old Testament priesthood, but of the prophetic figure of the Suffering Servant. The second or scribe's response to the prophetic revelation was to insist that man's salvation depended on the observance

of ordinances, which had divine sanction and were embodied in the Torah. This 'religion of the book' asserted that those who belonged to other races could only enter into the covenant privileges of the people who had the book if they adhered to Jewish Law and Jewish customs. Over against this Dr. Bowman maintains that Jesus attached to His ministry and His death a redemptive significance which made Him redeemer and lord of all men, irrespective of race and of privilege. The world view of Jesus was in accord with that of the prophets, and not like that of the Pharisees. The third Jewish form of response to God's call was that of the apocalyptic writers, who claimed by their visions to set forth God's ways to men. Their teaching centred round the throne of God in heaven, the transcendent Messiah, the transcendent order, the transcendent ethic. Dr. Bowman thinks Jesus had less sympathy with this 'religion of the throne' than with that of the altar and of the book. For Jesus the kingdom was something to be realized, not in the distant future, and on a heavenly plane, but rather on the plane of history. His use of the title Son of Man for Himself, like that of the Suffering Servant, emphasized humiliation. In the words 'I came not to judge the world but to save the world' (John 12<sup>47</sup>) the evangelist rightly expressed Jesus' mind over against the current apocalypticism. Christianity is the final religion. This is what Professor Bowman means by 'the religion of maturity'. The Church is right in claiming that Jesus has been 'the divine act answering to and fulfilling the divine word on the historical plane. In her witness, therefore, He is the final revelation of God and the divine demonstration that the prophetic revelation was entirely realistic in its claim that the "good life" can be lived in an imperfect world. According to her gospel He is the God-proposed response of man to the word of revelation, and is the manifestation in personality of what religion ought to be. Jesus is the Church's religion.' Dr. Bowman's able and clearly written exposition of a vital subject will repay careful study. It has received and deserved the Abingdon-Cokesbury Award for 1948.

F. BERTRAM CLOGG

*Saint Paul, Envoy of Grace*, by Robert Sencourt. (Hollis and Carter, 16s.)

This book depicts the character and work of St. Paul in a fresh and vivid fashion, so that the reader is, as it were, transported into the actual scenes of the Apostle's ministry. The author's touch as a literary artist and poet is everywhere felt. Reverent imagination is fully enlisted but is securely harnessed to established historical fact. The strength and value of the book lie in its descriptions, always fascinating and often moving, of the Apostle's life and times, and in the light it throws on not a few dark places in his letters. Many noteworthy points emerge—for example: the discussion of the phrase 'an angel of Satan'; the disposition to accept the Ephesian origin of the *Letter to the Philippians* and to believe in the Apostle's release from prison and subsequent journey to Spain; the suggestion that Barnabas needed the support of John Mark to endure 'the strain of living with so supernatural a genius' as St. Paul! Very suggestive too are some of the author's paraphrases of important passages, such as the address to the Athenians and 1 Corinthians 1<sup>18-21</sup> and 13. The style, if somewhat florid, is readable and along with the attractive illustrations sustains the interest throughout. It is curious, however, that in a book seeking to tell St. Paul's story 'in the words of our time' the author should print Parush (= Pharisee) and retain the Latinized forms Marcus, Lucanus, etc. What is more important, the book is not to be judged as an objective study of its subject in the light of modern Biblical research. The extensive Notes and Bibliography disclose a tendency to adopt conservative positions, for example, in regard to the authorship of the Pastorals and the *Epistle to the Hebrews*. It is a pity that numerous errors in quoting the names of writers and books mar the notes.

HENRY G. MEECHAM

*St. Augustine—the Lord's Sermon on the Mount.* (The Mercier Press, Cork. 15s.)

Those who delight in finding spiritual sustenance in the writings of the Fathers of the Church will welcome this volume. It is the work of three members of the (Roman) Catholic University of America, Washington, and bears the permissive *Nihil obstat* for Roman Catholic readers. Dr. J. J. Jenson is responsible for the translation, which appears to be a careful and conscientious piece of work, if a few samples taken at random are representative of the whole. There is a short introduction by Dr. J. Quasten, but the notes by J. C. Plumpe, running to over thirty pages, are one of the most interesting features of the book. Augustine's work is a running commentary on Chapters 5 to 7 of St. Matthew's Gospel. With much that is obvious there are also strained interpretations. Augustine re-inforces our Lord's words from the Pauline Letters and seeks to harmonize seeming contradictions between them. Scripture is, for him, verbally inspired, but again and again he plunges boldly into symbolic interpretation. In the Beatitudes he finds a close correspondence with 'the seven-fold operation of the Holy Spirit, spoken of by Isaiah', but in reverse order. Some of the exegesis, as, for example, in parts of our Lord's Prayer, might lead one to wonder whether our Lord deliberately posed problems of interpretation in order to engage the ingenuity of the minds of His disciples. While the text expounded is that of the Vulgate, there are references also to the Greek text. The English translation appears to be, with occasional very slight variations, that of the Rheims version. To a Protestant reader there are a few irritating translations, as 'Justice' (*justitia*) for δικαιοσύνη, and, particularly, 'to do penance' (*poenitentiam agere*) for μετανοεῖν. The work is beautifully produced, but opinions will vary as to whether such a commentary warrants elaborate republication today.

W. L. DOUGHTY

*Existentialism and Humanism*, by Jean Paul Sartre. Translation and Introduction by Philip Mairet. (Methuen, 5s.)

*The Philosophy of Decadentism: A Study of Existentialism*, by Norberto Bobbio. Translated by David Moore. (Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 5s.)

Existentialism is a temper rather than a philosophy and a bad temper at that. It may be described rather than defined. The group of writers who claim, or are accorded, the name of Existentialists possess very different conceptions of it. The ancestor of the movement was Kierkegaard. Some Existentialists, such as Marcel and Berdyaev, still link religion with their philosophy as did Kierkegaard. Jaspers is at least a theist. Heidegger and Sartre have no belief in God. Sartre philosophizes through plays and novels as well as in more normal ways, yet in none does he make Existentialism particularly intelligible. Mr. Mairet's introduction lets in some light on much obscurity, and it should be read carefully before embarking on M. Sartre's remarks. The latter are chiefly a defence of Existentialism against its critics rather than a detailed exposition of its tenets. None the less, a certain amount of explanation will be found amidst the defensive part of M. Sartre's work, in that, whilst denying what the critics say of Existentialism, he often corrects them by asserting what Existentialism does say, and this is the most valuable part of his work. As he has decided that God does not exist, he begins with man. He does not assert that man began himself, but he has nothing to say of the origins either of man or of the universe. That in itself sets Existentialism apart from the classical philosophies. If it is possible, and I doubt it, to describe Existentialism briefly, it is a strongly individualistic and unsocial view of life, beginning with man and ending with the grave. The chief attribute of man is freedom. On his shoulders M. Sartre places the burdens of being in the world and having to labour and to die there. He rejects materialism which he says treats man as an object as if he were a table or a stone. His philosophy is more akin to Pessimism

than to Humanism. He dwells on the 'anguish', which is the lot of man, as contrasted with the 'seriousness' of those who regard the world as more real than themselves. The Existentialist, conscious of his freedom, expresses that freedom by avoiding all the obligations of community life as traps. Existentialism is the philosophy of men who have ceased to believe in anything whilst trying to believe in themselves. It is a symptom, and hence impermanent, for symptoms must either merge into that of which they are symptomatic or disappear. It is a rebellion, and rebellions either establish themselves as governments or are lost. That Existentialism can serve to answer the questions for the sake of which men have sought the path of philosophy is impossible. Professor Bobbio thinks Existentialism is a symptom of the decadence of life, where aim, meaning, and God are alike lost. The freedom which it so strongly asserts is illusory. It signifies only that man is held to have neither past nor future. Humanism at least believes in man. Existentialism regards him as a 'useless passion'. Man, says Sartre, is 'condemned to be free'. 'We are left alone without excuse.' 'Man simply is.' 'Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself' and so forth. To the average reader the Existentialist movement may well seem as incomprehensible as its writings are unintelligible. In sentence after sentence familiar words occur, but they convey nothing understandable. Existentialism uses the vocabulary of philosophy to convey ideas which are foreign to all previous philosophy. It is easier to grasp its temper than its tenets. Though Sartre speaks of existentialist Humanism, yet, as Professor Bobbio says, this is not Humanism as we have hitherto conceived it, and Sartre admits as much. Scepticism and Pessimism seem the chief among the recognizable ingredients of Existentialism, and with two such poisons in its bloodstream the movement is likely to perish. 'There is no other universe except the human universe', says Sartre: 'the universe of human subjectivity.' The house confessedly built on that sand will not last long.

ERIC S. WATERHOUSE

*Religion*, by Nathaniel Micklem, with notes, bibliography, and index. (Oxford University Press, 5s.)

To combine a simply written guide for the beginner and an essay worth reading by the specialist may appear to be impossible, but in the Home University Library it has been done several times, and here it is done again. Could any praise be higher? Instead of taking primitive religions first and then great systems in their turn, either according to historical development or geographic area, this book introduces us to the subject of Religion by taking cross-sections. The Impersonal Sacred is seen in primitive *mana*, in Hindu philosophy, in the wider sphere of Buddhism, and in the Epicureans. The Religion of Nature lies behind both Confucian and Taoist traditions (though there is a greater contrast than is here shown in their use of that greatest Chinese word *Tao*); it is also found in Stoicism, Babylonian astrology, and Neoplatonism. The Most High God stands within the shadows for almost every people, advancing to significance with Ikhнатon and Zoroaster. Personal devotion is the way for Mahayana Buddhism, Indian Bhakti, the Shi-ites, and for Plato. Religions of Will include Islam and the Mosaic tradition to which it owed so much. Both Prophetic Religion and Mysticism are to be seen in primitive expression within as well as without the Old Testament, and in nobler manifestations in Greek and Arab, as well as Hebraic forms. 'Myth, Mime, and Mystery' provide a final cross-section. In almost all these subjects something akin is to be found in Christianity, yet it is also strangely different. 'Underlying this essay is the assumption that whatever is distinctive in Christianity rests upon historic facts unknown, ignored, or otherwise interpreted by non-Christians.' References are put together at the end of the book, but does not a reader want footnotes without a turn of the page?

JOHN FOSTER



*The Sociology of Religion*, by Joachim Wach. (Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 30s.)

This book, as its title shows, deals with an issue of the utmost importance today: 'the relation and inter-action of religion and society.' Sociology, the science of society, is the youngest of the sciences, whose right to be called a 'science' is not unquestioned. Professor Wach, a scholar of the school of Max Weber, prepared the material of his book as the substance of lectures in Brown University, U.S.A. His aim is to give a descriptive and analytical account of the social groupings which religion has created in its long history, co-terminous with the history of mankind. The book is therefore neither psychology of religion, nor comparative religion, nor theology. Its interest is simply in the social forms and groupings in which religion expresses itself. At once, some acute distinctions make themselves felt. While religion is defined, in agreement with Rudolph Otto, as 'the experience of the Holy', the sharpest challenge is offered to A. N. Whitehead's description of it as 'what a man does with his solitariness'. This is not to deny either the inward and subjective side of religion, or the objective fact, namely contact or communion with God, which excites the inner experiences. It is to say that religion does not exhaust itself in individual communion with God, but creates religious groups or communities. The greater portion of the book is taken up with a patient description of these, classified either as 'natural' religious groupings—such as the family, the tribe or nation, and the city-state—or as 'founded' religious groupings, such as the Christian Church, the Islamic Brotherhood, or Buddhist Communities. Here the point is that 'the experience of the Holy' is shared, with varying degrees of intensity, within each group. A further distinction is made between religion as a socially 'integrating' force, and religion as a socially divisive and disruptive force. A common religion will hold a society together, unifying the family or tribe and cementing the bonds of state. Divergences of religion, on the other hand, will cleave gulfs between tribes, split nations in twain, and create almost impassable barriers between great sections of mankind—e.g. Moslem and Hindu, Constantinople and Rome, Catholic and Protestant. Just because religion is socially integrating, its decline makes for social disruption. Is not the break-up of Christendom to be accounted for by such a cause? Thirdly, is religion socially creative or a product of other social forces? Mr. Christopher Dawson in his Gifford Lectures, *Religion as the Chief Source of Culture*, may be taken as a protagonist of the former position, Karl Marx of the second. While Professor Wach notes the tendency to interpret religion as a product of cultural and social forces and tendencies, he quotes with favour Max Weber's emphatic rejection of this latter view. There is, of course, a two-way movement between religion and society. If religion exerts a creative influence on society, and if its decline weakens the social bond, social forces acting on religion may corrupt or undermine it. Consider, for example, how religion has suffered from state patronage or from underpinning by the economically prosperous. The two most significant chapters in this book are 'Religion and the State', and 'Types of Religious Authority', where the influence of Founders, Reformers, and Prophets is considered. Professor Wach closes with an intriguing section on 'The Audience'. E. CLIFFORD URWIN

*The Elements of Moral Theology*, by R. C. Mortimer. (A. and C. Black, 10s. 6d.)

Professor Mortimer of Christ Church, Oxford, has aimed at producing an introductory work on theological morality as understood by High Anglicans, but many ministers besides those of the author's own communion must have felt the need of guidance in the application of Christian morality to individual cases. Long ago Mr. Bradley, for instance, accepted the importance of what used to be called Casuistry,



as practised in Confession. It is natural enough therefore that Canon Mortimer has sought inspiration and light in the teaching of Thomas Aquinas and other scholastic writers. Indeed his book may be said to be one of the fruits of the neo-scholastic movement as it impinges upon the Anglican Church. It has therefore the merits and defects of that school of thought. It accepts the analysis of human nature as understood by Aristotle and adopts the scheme of morals worked out by the great medieval thinkers. Consequently we find the usual sevenfold system of virtues applied to modern social life and illustrated by many excellently chosen cases, such as are likely to be met with in a clergyman's work. There is frequent appeal to authority, whether of the Bible or the Church or Thomas Aquinas, along with belief in the ultimate rights of reason and conscience as enlightened by revelation. All this is skilfully managed and expressed in language at once choice and simple. Yet one may long for a treatment both more modern and richer, since the complexities of social life today call out for an application of Christian principles to current behaviour which is much more thorough than Professor Mortimer's scheme allows. And there appear to be flaws in the author's reasoning. The authority of the Church seems to rest upon revelation and revelation upon the authority of the Church. And one wonders sometimes which Church—whether the Anglican or the Roman Catholic or the 'undivided'—is referred to as authoritative. We are told that the Christian faith is one and integrated, and that within the Christian body of doctrine all is true or all is false. Hence heresy is sin and co-operation with Nonconformists in worship is dangerous. Doubtless such opinions will appeal to a certain type of High Church clergyman, for whom the book appears to be specially designed, but others may be doubtful about them.

ATKINSON LEE

*La Sainte Eglise Universelle.* (Delachaux et Niestlé, Neuchâtel, *francs suisses* 8.)

This is a special volume in a notable series of theological works appearing in Switzerland. It is an ecumenical work, of five lengthy essays, written by theological professors of different communions. It invites comparison with the first volume of the Amsterdam Assembly Series. Indeed, the first essay by Georges Florovsky of the Orthodox Church, 'The Body of the Living Christ', is a larger version of his contribution in the Amsterdam volume. It presses the same point, that 'Christ is entire' in the Church, with fuller references. In 'Reality and Character of the Church', Franz Leenhardt of Geneva expresses the Reformed viewpoint. The message of Jesus generated the Church, which is a new sociological reality. The special character of the Church comes from divine intervention, the call of God in Christ. Third, Regin Preter of Denmark writes on 'The Church according to the witness of the Confession of Augsburg'. In this Lutheran confession the Church is 'the congregation of saints'. There is an apostolical succession, but it is 'not a succession of bishops. . . . Everywhere that men baptize correctly, communicate correctly, and preach correctly, there is a true and indubitable apostolical succession.' 'Correctness' means conformity with the will of Christ and with the human ordinances of the Christian community. Canon Richardson of Durham gives 'An Anglican interpretation of the Church'—a biblical study of the origin of the Church, followed by the Anglican claim to be catholic, liberal, and orthodox. C. Spicq, a Dominican professor, contributes the final essay, 'The Church of Christ'. It is strictly Roman Catholic, with an *imprimatur*. The Biblical study is traditional, though based on the Greek and Aramaic. The Church is said to be not only one and holy, but also hierarchical. Stress is laid on Petrine supremacy and papal infallibility. The whole book will serve to supplement and deepen the Amsterdam studies.

E. GEOFFREY PARRINDER

*The History of Jewish Mysticism*, by Ernst Mueller. (Phaidon Press, 8s. 6d.)

This is a fascinating book. Its purpose is to give a comprehensive survey of a field whose greater part is virtually unknown to the non-Jewish reader. Of the Cabbalah, the Zohar, and the teachings of the Chassidim, Christians know little or nothing. Is there any reason why we should? A first answer to that question, I think, is that we shall find in the writings of the Jewish mystics, or at any rate in the story of their striving after the cultivation of personal communion between the worshipper and God, many a clue to the better understanding of the Jewish people today, and that is surely important. But, apart from this, the Jews have made their own contribution to the story of mysticism. Their mysticism, like much else in Jewish life, is twofold in its emphasis. It has a devotional or practical as well as an intellectual or speculative side, and while at certain periods or in certain writings one side may have been emphasized at the cost, or even to the exclusion of, the other, the over-all picture shows how the two emphases are constantly being brought into relation to each other. And that is a matter of very real practical, and not merely academic interest. For, as Dr. Mueller points out, just as under the influence of the Chassidic Movement of the eighteenth century, 'the arid disputatiousness of Talmudic learning gave place to simplicity of expression and fervour of faith', so today in 'the conflicts which are raging in the soul [of Jewry], and in the experiences which are being stored up by its mind at this moment' there is a challenge to 'the continuation and renovation of Judaism'. To the meeting of that challenge he believes that an understanding of the history of Jewish mysticism constitutes 'one of the most important preliminaries'. This short book (of some 160 pages) is both comprehensive and incisive; it is well indexed and annotated; there is a valuable bibliography, and an Appendix where the reader will find an interesting selection of quotations from various schools of Jewish mystical writings. There is also a valuable chapter which deals with Cabbalistic tendencies outside Judaism and shows the extent to which, both directly and indirectly, Jewish mysticism has influenced or contributed to the numerous mystical movements of Christian Europe.

WILLIAM W. SIMPSON

*Modern Trends in Islam*, by H. A. R. Gibb. (Chicago University Press, via Cambridge Press, 14s.)

The Laudian Professor of Arabic at Oxford delivered the Haskell Lectures here published at Chicago University in 1945. He is a master of his subject, and his lectures are worthy to stand beside A. B. Macdonald's, delivered in 1906. With great clarity and conciseness he expounds his understanding of modern trends in Islam, and with the sympathy that does not hesitate to criticize. In the course of a profoundly interesting and authentic lecture on the foundations of Islamic thought he shows how deeply he has entered into it. 'We shall not grasp what the Koran means to the Arab until we make an effort to appreciate the part that language plays in determining his psychological attitude.' The aesthetic feeling of the Arab is expressed in language whose power of emotional appeal 'may even be so great as to inhibit the capacity to form a synthesis'. He contrasts the imaginative power of the Arab with the pedantry and literalness in Arabic literature and points to a certain 'atomism and discreetness' characteristic of the Arab imagination. While this helped in the development of experimental science, it led also to a casuistical, ethical, and legal system. There is a devotion of the Arab mind to the particular and some hesitancy and distrust in the face of abstract and *a priori* concepts. Equally important is Professor Gibb's exposition of *ijmā*, the 'consensus of the community', and *ijtihād*, 'exercise of judgement'. Of the former he says: 'Consensus is by no means a liberal principle; on the contrary it is a principle of authority.' The orthodox seek to limit both *ijmā* and

*ijtihād* to the early days of Islam, but in the former the modernist sees some hope of appeal to a principle which he calls 'democratic', and in the latter a principle of free inquiry which will oppose to the blind following of authority, private judgement and the necessity for personal verification of the truth. There is tension in Islam and the problem is whether to pull down the old or erect a new social structure. The tension is partly theological, and consists on the one hand of a desire to maintain the old transcendental doctrines of the Koran, resulting in a system called by Gibb (following Al Ghazzālī) a 'transcendental mausoleum', and on the other hand to promote the freer mysticism which the sage named did so much to integrate in Muslim thought. Conservative reactions have taken place in such people as the Wahhabis of Arabia and the Ahlu'l Ḥadīth of India. The work of Jamalu'd Dīn Afghānī and Muhammad Abduh, reformers of recent times, is passed under review, as also the work of Sir Muhammad Iqbal, the poet-philosopher of Indian Islam. This latter name reminds us that Professor Gibb, writing admittedly with little personal knowledge of Indian Islam, would admit that the type of thinking in an Islamic race other than the Arabic, however strongly influenced linguistically by Arabic, will in some points differ from that of the Arabs. In the lecture on the principles of Modernism the question is asked whether secular education in the Muslim world will have the same results on religious thought as in the Christian world. Here Professor Gibb points to a schism between the secularly educated Muslim who does not write about religion and the theologically educated doctor of Islam who has little or no secular education. In the West, theologians are influencing and reshaping religious thought by reference to current philosophy and ideas of history. There is nothing corresponding to this on the side of Islam, except a little in Abduh. The need for an extension of historical appreciation in Islam is stressed. Liberal modernists 'by their disregard of all standards of investigation and of historical truth, have debauched the intellectual insight and integrity of their fellow-Muslims'. There is a tendency to treat the Koran as purely homiletic and to concentrate religious feeling on the person of Muhammad. These are only a few of the good things with which this book is packed. The lectures on 'Law and Society' and on the place of 'Islam in the World' are full of suggestive thought, careful diagnosis, and justifiable prognosis. Everyone who goes to a Muslim country should buy and read this book.

JAMES W. SWEETMAN

*The Worship of the English Puritans*, by Horton Davies. (Dacre Press, 25s.)

American historians have valiantly led the way in the re-presentation, long overdue, of Puritanism. The few English contributions are now strongly reinforced by Dr. Horton Davies. His valuable book is long likely to be an indispensable tool for students of liturgiology and historians of Puritanism. It surveys the whole development of Puritanism from its beginnings in the mid-sixteenth century, pausing appropriately at all the critical points, outlining the important documents, and pointing the moral and adorning the tale with variously informative and diverting quotations from the primary sources. The chapters on 'Puritan Prayer Books' and 'Puritan Preaching' remind the reader of the positive content of the Puritan belief and witness, so amply evidenced in Dr. Nuttall's recent book, even though Dr. Davies's narrative has inevitably to be confined to the dialectic of English history and the continual struggle with episcopacy and the Prayer Book. It is perhaps unfair to criticize opening chapters, since preliminary historical surveys are often on the margin of an author's specialized knowledge, but we could have wished for some hint of the existence of the left-wing indigenous Protestant movement in England which ante-dated the Continental Puritans. The view that Bucer exercised more personal influence on the English clergy than Peter Martyr is the reverse of the truth (Bucer had no grateful disciples as Peter Martyr had his John Jewell), while the statement that 'Bucer was a

disciple of Calvin' can only be excused by the date of the quotation (1856) since modern research has clearly shown in how much Bucer was the precursor of Calvin. Dr. Davies's long comparison between the theology of worship in Luther and in Calvin includes some similarly dated generalizations. And since, on Dr. Davies's own showing, there is no real pedigree between Luther and the Anglican tradition, despite real agreements and similarities, we rather wish he had begun with a firm appraisal of the Anglican tradition, its medieval inheritance, and the creative achievement of Cranmer. For, as his book makes clear, the story of English religion, as of English liberties, is that of a dialogue, an antiphon between the Establishment and Dissent. Not to see both sides together, as though each were shadow boxing in its own corner, is to miss the positive significance of much that might seem purely negative. Since the consecrated 'cussedness', which so nobly refused to be brow-beaten by dignities, lies but a hair's breadth from unconsecrated cantankerousness, an isolated list of the Puritans' negative demands may easily do injustice to their deep and passionate loyalties. But we are grateful to Dr. Davies for showing how rich and many-sided was the Puritan movement, and how infinitely removed from 'squalid sluttish' were conventicles where 'a Puritan preacher mounted the steps of his pulpit as if he were a Moses ascending the mountain of Sinai', and, we may add, dared to speak to his Maker as a man speaketh with his friend. Those of us Methodists who feel more kinship with the fruits of Cranmer's than of Baxter's genius, may still rejoice that by our history and our inheritance we are also grateful debtors to the English Puritans.

E. GORDON RUFF

*Apokalyptisches Wetterleuchten*, by H. Schmid. (Bavarian Evangelical Publications Society, Munich.)

'Remember the Lusitania'; 'Remember Belsen'; 'Remember Hiroshima'. These appeals fall on rather deaf ears today, like the older appeals to remember Kilmainham, or even the fifth of November. We have too much to do in trying to forecast the future. Even the gallant fight of the German Confessional Churches against the Nazis in the years immediately before and after the outbreak of war, when the new and ruthless government found in German religion its one serious opponent, is passing from our minds. Its record came to us in patches, side by side with the sorry tale of the so-called 'German Christians'. And now that the Evangelical Church in Germany has once more a chance to recover its youth, we think little of the sufferings it has endured, the lessons it has learnt, the hopes it cherishes, or the kind of assistance that the Church in less desolated regions can afford. But if the Confessional Churches, in the days before Munich, dared to defy Hitler, it may be that they will be able to render a service both to Germany and to world Christianity which is beyond the reach of religious communities elsewhere. A welcome record of the conflict of those dark years, more particularly from 1933 to 1937, with some extensions to 1944, has been compiled by Pfarrer H. Schmid, who was himself closely connected with the leaders of the resistance movement, especially Bishops Meiser and Wurm, the first of whom writes an introduction to the book. The author entitles his book *Apokalyptisches Wetterleuchten*—Apocalyptic Sheet-lightning, though one is tempted to translate the second word as meaning Storm Signals. The first part of the book is historical, and tells of the initial attacks by the State, the notorious 'Reichsbischof' Mueller, the 'Ministry of Religion' with Kerl at its head, the continuous protests of the leaders of the Church, and the brutal measures taken against it during the war. The story of the vain attempts to secure the liberation of Pastor Niemöller is simply and pathetically told. The second part, looking at the conflict from within, describes widespread and courageous opposition of individual Churches as well as of the recognized leaders, the



'discovery' by the Churches of the heritage which they had been losing, their own significance for the life of the nation, the value today of the Old Testament (recklessly flung aside by Rosenberg and his crew with a contempt which would have horrified Marcion), and the new experience of the sustaining power and grace of God. A large part of the book is taken up with official publications and regulations, and the dignified letters and replies of the two bishops named above. As few in this country will be able to obtain the book, some impressions left by its perusal may be noted: first, the widespread and vigorous opposition of the Church to the earlier attacks; second, the sympathy and help shown by a certain number of Christians to the Jews, who suffered as no others had to suffer; third, the almost complete silence of the author as to the Catholic resistance. While this omission is in accordance with the plan of the book, which sets out to deal only with the evangelical Churches (but does not even mention the Baptists or the Methodists), the silence is none the less a melancholy witness to the absence of anything like real co-operation or understanding between the two communions, united in their misfortunes, but divided both by their traditions and their organization. Fourth, nothing save protests and passive endurance seems to have been possible. There is no trace of the action of men whom we should call 'influential laymen', and the Gospel warning against drawing the sword is taken to mean that the only strategy is to bow the neck before the oppressor. Lastly, there is the conviction that the sufferings of the Christians in Germany are vicarious, that they have been bearing the burdens of sinners throughout the world—that none of us can claim to be guiltless of the hardness of heart that has brought calamities upon Christendom. This consciousness makes the closing appeal to the '*ekumene*' all the more poignant. If our neighbour's house has been so hardly rescued from the fire, what of our own defences?

WILLIAM F. LOFTHOUSE

*Isaac Watts: His Life and Works*, by Arthur Paul Davis. (Independent Press, 8s. 6d.)

*Isaac Watts's 'A Guide to Prayer'*, abridged and edited by Harry Escott. (The Epworth Press, 5s.)

The bi-centenary of Watts's death (25th November 1748) has brought, along with articles in the religious Press, these two welcome books. The author of the first is an American. His book, which is fully documented, with useful appendixes, bibliographies, and indexes, is the result of devoted study. While it bears the stamp of a thesis rather than of marked creative ability, it supplies a long-felt want. In the first three chapters, Mr. Davis deals with the story of Watts's life, and then studies his work as educationist, controversialist, preacher and essayist, poet and hymn-writer, concluding with a summary of his character and influence. Watts—so strong in mind and work—is shown as a delicate bachelor, sheltered and fostered in the homes of his richer dissenting friends. It is useless, therefore, to look for a story with adventure in it. An evangelical preacher, he was not an evangelist, but he was genuinely anxious to proclaim the doctrines of the Puritans in whose succession he stood. He knew everybody that was anybody, and Mr. Davis records meticulously all his friendships and acquaintances among intellectual and religious leaders, Anglican, Dissenting, and Methodist. As a preacher he drew large congregations even though he 'had a thin voice and possessed neither the pulpit-energy of a Whitefield nor the rough humour of a Bradbury. His appearance was not prepossessing. Only about five feet tall, with grey eyes, pale complexion, low forehead and prominent cheek bones, he was by no means a handsome man, and yet he was not ugly.' Watts's knowledge was so wide that he could turn his hand to text-books on such subjects as astronomy, mathematics, and logic. Then there are his religious verses for children. We have all smiled over 'the busy bee' and 'let dogs delight', but for a century 'Watts' was a staple article in



the diet of the schoolroom and Dr. Johnson greatly approved of his verses. All that the general reader or the student is likely to want to know about Watts is to be found in these pages. But Watts's importance is narrowed now chiefly to the hymns, and it is unfortunate that it is just here that we are disappointed. The facts are stated—the facts of his conscious initiative in the writing and singing of hymns—but these are too bare of themselves. It is very surprising to find no reference at all to Bernard Manning's well-known essay.

Among Watts's many works, *A Guide to Prayer* comes next the hymns. Dr. Nathaniel Micklem once described it as 'for ministers still the best book on the subject'. Mr. Harry Escott has now edited and abridged this devotional classic, which, originally intended for boys and girls, has proved of most value to adults. The three chapters treat of the Nature, Gift, and Grace of Prayer. The first of these speaks of the well-known parts of prayer—adoration, petition, confession, and the like. In the second and third chapters the reader benefits from Watts's deeply spiritual experience and finds his own devotional life corrected and stimulated. For men seeking help in the way of leading public prayer, and tempted increasingly to doubt the possibility of achieving success, this little book is likely to be of great value. Those who think free prayer is undisciplined should read Watts's ways in it. He shows that here there is a unique effort of the spirit open to us, different from that of catholic manuals or the prayer-books, but calling for intense vigilance and a continual study of the Bible. In his prayers, as in his hymns, Watts shows his complete devotion to the Scriptures.

HAROLD S. DARBY

*A Herald of the Evangelical Revival*, by Eric W. Baker. (The Epworth Press, 12s. 6d.)  
*About William Law*, by Arthur W. Hopkinson. (S.P.C.K., 8s. 6d.)

William Law is commanding a good deal of attention in these days. Here are two new books dealing with him. The first is described, in a sub-title, as 'a critical inquiry into the relation of William Law to John Wesley, and the beginnings of Methodism'. It is a sound and scholarly piece of work and a real contribution to our knowledge of the subject. The relation between William Law and early Methodism is one of perennial interest. There can be no doubt at all about the profound influence of Law upon the Wesleys in their early days. As Charles Wesley said, he was 'our John the Baptist'. But beyond that there is the whole question of the relation of the Wesleys to Law in later years, and of their attitude to mysticism generally. Dr. Baker's treatment of the latter issue is very sensible. The governing factor was the false quietism introduced by Molther, and the very real perils that this brought with it. The fact that Charles Wesley was swept away by it for a time, and the fantastic extravagances which it promoted among the Moravians, are sufficient to illustrate the actual danger. The change in John Wesley's attitude toward the mystics, and especially toward Law, in later years, is almost certainly due to the fact that the peril of 'stillness' and the Antinomian spirit which it produced, had largely passed away in the last twenty years of Wesley's life. The influence of Jacob Boehme upon Law, a factor of the very first importance, bears definitely upon Wesley's attitude toward Law. For the plain fact is that while at his best Boehme was a really great mystical writer, at his worst he wrote screeds of stuff that were scarcely sane. Witness the exposition of the Lord's Prayer in German which Wesley quotes, where, for example, *dein Nahme* is expounded syllabically thus: 'When we say *dein* we understand how the poor soul swims in the water of this world. In the syllable *nah* it inclines inward; and in the syllable *me* it comprehends the heavenly substantiality.' One does not wonder that Wesley said that such an exegetical method suggested 'a very high degree of lunacy', yet Law venerated all that Boehme wrote as if it were inspired. The great doctrinal aberration in Law is

his wholly subjective view of the Atonement. He says expressly in *The Spirit of Love* that Christ 'is, in no other sense, our full, perfect, and sufficient atonement, than as His nature and Spirit are born, and formed in us'. It is, of course, profoundly true that our Lord's atoning work is only fulfilled in the experience of the individual as the mind of Christ is formed in him, but Law meant more than that. We may be thankful that Wesley realized the grave defect of Law's teaching here, and held on firmly to the Cross as the centre of a historic act of redemption which was complete, and (so to speak) independent of any succeeding experience in the lives of men.

The other volume, which has a foreword by the Dean of Winchester, is written from the High Anglican standpoint, and is therefore much more interested in the Bangorian controversy and in the Non-jurors, than some other studies of Law. (It is rather odd, by the way, to read that Dr. Johnson 'cared nothing for Non-jurors'.) Along with Professor G. M. Trevelyan he takes a rather rosy view of English religion in the eighteenth century. But it is surprising to find Mr. Hopkinson defending Law's defective doctrine of redemption, which most certainly falls short of the Catholic faith.

HENRY BETT

*A Charge to Keep*, by Frank Baker. (The Epworth Press, 8s. 6d.)

This book not only offers an introduction to the people called Methodists, but surveys quite briefly the origin, development, and expansion of Methodism and outlines the fundamentals, activities, and organization of the largest Protestant Church in the world. It is intended primarily for the 'keen' layman who seeks to know in outline the story of the Methodist Church as a whole. While its literary style may leave something to be desired, as a bird's-eye view it is excellent, and if a detailed study of any one of the features is contemplated, this account of the whole will serve as a corrective to the limited outlook which is the fault of the specialist. The impact of an individual on a decadent age such as was the eighteenth century fills the reader in this nationalistic period with hope. The monopoly of frigid churchmanship gave way to the communal heartwarming that saved England and made the world one parish. Character dominates the history here recorded, and integrity will also master the connivance and subterfuge of our day and generation. The revival came from above, first from God, and then through the sterling character of John Wesley. Persecution from the challenged forces was to be expected and peril from the ignorant masses to be endured. This the author makes clear. The masterly ecclesiastical extemporization of early Methodism served its living force and in the commando campaigns of our time and the varied methods of approach now practised we may see another awakening. The passing of Wesley gave full rein to those who would go farther in enterprise while standing firm by principles. So came the offshoots of Methodism, now once more united. Complacency is now the peril of some of the children of rebels, and if this 'popular' introduction leads the Methodists of today to an intensive study of their heritage, they may well reap an undreamed harvest.

J. HENRY MARTIN

*The Englishman's Religion*. An Anthology. Edited with an Introduction by Ashley Sampson. (Allen and Unwin, 7s. 6d.)

This anthology appears in a series under the general title of a 'Library of English Thought and Life', and the emphasis in Mr. Sampson's title is on 'the Englishman'. He has made up his mind what the peculiarly English characteristics in religious expression are and then selected his examples to suit. His view of religion is that it is 'not so much an art as an atmosphere—not so much of cultivation as of climate'. None of the selected characteristics is particularly theological. The love of freedom, the disposition to compromise or tolerate, the preference for practical idealism over

mysticism, and perhaps a certain ironic element of unconscious humour—these are the stones on which the writer erects our national temple. He notes also, in passing, the aptitude of the English 'to assume a monopoly of Godly approval for their cause which must have been exasperating to foreigners'—possibly a salutary reminder. Its angle being understood, this is an interesting collection. It opens with an excerpt from Beowulf about the making of peace between the Frisians and the Danes and Sir Ector's lament over Launcelot from Malory, and concludes with the well-known 'Airman's Letter to his Mother' which came out of the late war. In between are many things we should expect to find, but some are less obvious. An extract from Langland's *Vision*, Chaucer's 'Poor Parson', Addison's 'Sir Roger at Church', some selections from *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Blake's 'Jerusalem', Matthew Arnold's 'East London' sonnet, Kipling's 'Recessional', Watts's 'O God, our help' (where one is mischievously inclined to ask, why not Lyte's 'Abide with me?') are among the items. Wyclif, Julian of Norwich, More, Latimer, Donne, Herbert, Browne, Crashaw, George Fox, Bunyan, Traherne, are also laid under contribution, and, from later times, Newman, F. W. Robertson (the sermon on 'Christian Casuistry'), Kingsley, Benjamin Jowett, Spurgeon, Hardy ('The Mellstock Quire'), and Bernard Shaw (from *Saint Joan*). Wesley is represented by one extract from his *Journal* (12th August 1748), giving his reflections on Homer. There is, too, Wellington's despatch containing his deprecation of Methodist 'enthusiasm' in the army, but not, to companion it, the 'practical idealism' of Nelson's toleration of Methodism in the navy. Something seems to have gone wrong with the ending of Drake's 'Prayer before Cadiz', for it does not read grammatically, and Spurgeon's middle name is misspelt.

PHILIP J. FISHER

*If He Came—Ten Scenes on One Theme*, by Frank C. Raynor. (The Epworth Press, 7s. 6d.)

This book contains ten dramatic sketches—the theme being, 'What would one who was almost a second Christ say and do in the twentieth century? How would he say it? What response would he get? What would happen to him?' Mr. Raynor has done a difficult piece of work with delicacy and vision in a book of dramatic and spiritual power. We read it through at 'a sitting' (on a long railway journey) and it won our interest from start to finish. The situations are moulded on Gospel episodes, which are placed in modern situations, and reveal the disturbing influences created by the sudden appearance of one who speaks to a conventional world with a revolutionary message both in religion and ethics. Few understand, others doubt, and many find the new message too disturbing to accept. The material benefits are greedily received by all, but the spiritual demands are accepted by only a few and rejected by many. Mr. Raynor depicts the early home life of the new teacher, the silent years, his setting out on his ministry, the gathering together of a few disciples, his healing of the sick, his tender and understanding love for 'publicans' and sinners. The scenes are set, not under Eastern skies or in a distant century, but here and now in our own land. The ten scenes lead us to the midst of the new prophet's ministry, and there end. Mr. Raynor says: 'Possibly one day I may be able to carry the story to its conclusion.' We hope that he will make the attempt. We greatly admire Mr. Raynor's facility in dialogue, his clarity, and the way in which the drama never turns back on itself, but moves steadily forward. We were much moved by the beauty of some of the descriptions of nature in her loveliness, and above all by the tenderness and urgency of the central message of Love's healing power. On technical grounds the Lord Chamberlain is unable to license for public performance these dramatic sketches, but though they cannot be acted, they can be read. We hope they will have many readers, for there is power and inspiration in these 'ten scenes'. To quote the words of the central figure: 'This is the word! The power of God is free to your hand.'

W. BARDSLEY BRASH

*Poetry and Prayer*, by Edward Shillito. (Independent Press, 4s.)

For the author of this little book, first issued in 1931, a deep love of poetry and a wide acquaintance with the riches of English verse have opened new ways into the presence of God. He begins with the problem of a man who on Sunday at 6 p.m. must 'lay down his Keats and go to church', exchange the world of poetry for the world of prayer. Need the two worlds seem so alien to each other? As a man kneels in prayer must he try to forget the words still echoing in his ears, words in which the poet's vision of beauty is incarnate? It is an old problem. Ruskin felt its pressure, and never reached a solution. Dora Greenwell found the question not only sharply asked, but also answered, in the Cross. Mr. Shillito also has seen that there need be no breach of continuity between the poet's world of beauty and the Christian's world of grace. He has learned that beauty's voice need be no siren music, luring away from Christ, but itself part of the heavenly anthem in which the redeemed adore the Lamb. This he expounds, with a wealth of illustration drawn from Shakespeare, from Milton and the other Christian poets of the seventeenth century, from Browning, from Alice Meynell and Francis Thompson and Robert Bridges. Through them all he has learned, and here teaches his readers, more of the meaning of adoration, the way of intercession, the joy of the communion in which the saints together sound the depths and scale the heights of God's love. A pity, though, that so attractive and suggestive a book should here and there be marred by carelessness in writing or, it may be, in proof-reading.

FRANCIS B. JAMES

*From My Heart to Yours*, by N. Gilbert Cheyne. (The Epworth Press, 2s. 6d.)

In her short collection of poems, *From My Heart to Yours*, Gilbert Cheyne sets her philosophy of life to music. The little book should be read more than once, for it shows good craftsmanship and has some inspired lines, but, beyond these qualities, it offers an interpretation of life, so delicately phrased that one may, at first, miss its deeper message for sheer joy in its phrasing. Some of the poems contain passages which convey a sense of pathos and heart-hunger in a dozen words or less. The *War Widow*, for example, begins, 'There is no hand to touch me but my own'. Yet Gilbert Cheyne, describing spiritual solitude and desolation, is not content to leave us in the shadows and the gloom. In *Comfort* a son speaks, from beyond, to his bereaved mother:

*If only you could come and see  
The flowers and sun,  
The light and happiness for everyone,  
You would not mourn for me!  
My life has just begun.*

Nor is her message of consolation a pious platitude. The last verse of a short poem on *Progress* could only be written by one whose spirit is resolved to reach the ultimate goal, however dimly the trail is seen:

*Nothing can hurt me, for I know my soul  
Is finding now the purpose of its being.  
Stumbling, I hasten toward some heavenly goal  
With groping, eager hands and eyes unseeing.  
These grievous pangs of love and heavy tears  
Drop like dead leaves into the lap of Time—  
Only to be forgotten as the years  
Fall into place, forming a plan sublime.*

In a more positive mood she writes of a surgeon's hands, whose fingertips are 'as gentle as a prayer'. The wife, in her soliloquy, makes her confession:

*Above these dedicated hands ascend  
My prayers! God grant to them  
Long years of skilful labouring,  
To bring disease and sorrow to an end!*

This slender volume is distinguished by its sure discernment of eternal spiritual values, whether they are manifest in the nocturnes and preludes of Chopin or in the flowering of an American daisy. There is a background which betrays the author's love for America, for Italy, and for England—but there is, over all the canopy of heaven, a precious thing in days when men, looking upward, see nothing but clouds. For our own part we are grateful for these songs with their rhythmic beauty and their brave philosophy which holds fast to the divine purpose, and seeks, step by step, the Great Design. L. F. C.

*The Parson Preaching*, by Clement F. Rogers. (S.P.C.K., 8s.)

The author of this valuable book has long been known, not only as a former Professor of Pastoral Theology at King's College, London, and the writer of helpful books on *Pastoralia*, but also as an open-air speaker in Hyde Park and elsewhere. As its title indicates his book is a treatise on 'Homiletics'. There are chapters on the collection and storage of material for sermons, and also on the composition and delivery of sermons. Here, and in the 'notes' which are frequently as long as the text itself, the preacher will find much real help. The Author often quotes from foreign writers, ancient and modern, mercifully adding good English translations. One could wish that the 'notes' did not so often refer to the author's own earlier writings, for but few of these are now obtainable. About one-third of the book is taken up by nine 'appendixes'. These are by no means the least valuable or informative part of the book. There is a long list of soldiers' questions during a 'Padre's hour'—for instance, 'Was Jesus God on earth?', 'Did He rise from the dead?', 'Was He not a pacifist?', 'Is prayer of any use?' Professor Rogers lectured in Hyde Park for sixteen years on equally vital subjects—e.g. 'The case for miracles', 'Why we believe in God', 'Science and Religion', 'Evolution and the Fall', and 'How we got our Creeds'. The rest of the 'appendixes' deal with such matters as 'Hymn Singing', 'the Literature of Preaching', 'Subjects for Sermons' (especially for the 'Christian year'). The book ends with an excellent index. In it the names mentioned most frequently are Aristotle (12 times), Pascal (9 times), and Dr. Johnson (8 times). The name of 'John Wesley' does not appear, but his brother Charles is mentioned once as a writer of hymns, and on p. 120 we are told that 'it is doubtful whether the modern preacher would get much help from the study of Tillotson or Wesley'. Clearly the author of this book has his own limitations. But we thank him for his real help to preachers. THOMAS H. BARRATT

*The New India*, by Sir Atul Chandra Chatterjee. (Allen and Unwin, 8s. 6d.)

Readers in England will appreciate having a view of the India of today by an Indian who from long and wide experience can write with judgement and authority. The author was a member of the Indian Civil Service for twenty-seven years and held many important official posts during the British Administration. The facts are set forth here in clear and reliable terms, and it is refreshing to find a convinced nationalist, who hails with obvious satisfaction the transfer of power, revealing with historical impartiality the progress and development achieved during the period of British rule, especially in Agriculture, Industries, and Communications. It is true that one cannot



credit the book with wide vision or imagination. There is too much of the aroma of files and red tape for that. The old Indian Civil Service official cannot free himself from the style of a 'note' on a government file. Yet this brings a detachment that makes for impartiality as against prejudice. There are in turn clear chapters on Religions, Agriculture (an especially good and informing chapter), Industries, Health, Education. Those who have any knowledge of India from the inside, even those well-wishers who rejoice in the prospect of the New India that is to be, will feel that the author is too confident in thinking that many conditions that are admittedly far from satisfactory, if not bad, will soon be easily remedied. He is optimistic, but the right road is often a long road, and sometimes a hard road. But this book is a worthy contribution toward a better understanding of India.

ARTHUR J. REVNELL

## From My New Shelf

BY C. RYDER SMITH

*Christianity and Civilization, First Part: Foundations*, by Emil Brunner. (Nisbet & Co., 10s.)

This is the first volume of Dr. Brunner's Gifford Lectures. As he says in his Preface, the subject has long been clamant. Several able writers have dealt with parts of it, but here it is taken as an ample whole. This appears in the first of its notable characteristics—it deals with the nine 'problems' of Being, Truth, Time, Meaning, the Universe, Personality and Humanity, Justice, Freedom, and Creativity. Its second merit lies in its historical method. Dr. Brunner traces each problem, not from the Renaissance, as in some other books, but from earlier days—usually from ancient Greece, whose root error lay in its 'immanentism' as over against Biblical 'creationism'. Under 'justice', rather strangely, the writer omits the Greeks. The third characteristic is the unity of the book. The elucidation of the historical background always exhibits the same error, 'humanism', in one or other of its kaleidoscopic forms. Fourth, there is Dr. Brunner's insight. Again and again he shows in a lucid phrase or two the unsuspected but unmistakable meaning of some phenomenon. He has a genius for this. Fifth, there is the clarity of the book. This does not mean that it is 'anybody's book', for none of its nine problems can be discussed unless the reader has some knowledge of philosophy and theology, but, granted this, there is hardly anything that is at all obscure. There are a few misprints, and I find that at five points I have scribbled a query in the margin, but none of them concerns the main argument. It seems that at St. Andrews, where the lectures were delivered, most discussion arose under Justice. The question, 'Is there a natural law?', of course, intrudes here. By 'justice', though he does not chance to say so, Dr. Brunner means *dikē*, not *dikaioσunē*. Under Freedom, as under Justice, the writer recapitulates an earlier work. He thinks that, while 'Luther and Calvin . . . went a long way in the direction of complete, metaphysical determinism', they were really 'driving at a truly Biblical conception of freedom as being identical with independence of God'. This quotation is from a series of valuable 'Notes' at the end of the volume. While, as already implied, the book is not for the many 'practical men' who say that they are 'not interested' in fundamental truth, Dr. Brunner everywhere remembers them, showing that all their ills are the products of current pseudo-philosophies, however unconscious they may be of this. No 'ivory tower' of a merely theoretical discussion for him! Throughout the book Dr. Brunner

criticizes all the Churches of the West, though mainly the Roman Church in its climacteric medieval days. On the other hand, he does not omit to point out merits. An evangelical Christian can only thank God for the book. It is true that in this book it is the Doctrine of Creation, not the Doctrine of Salvation, to which Dr. Brunner appeals, but the one is the proper prelude of the other. There is perhaps a hint in the last sentence of the volume that more will be said about the Doctrine of Salvation in the second series of Lectures. Meanwhile, for one reader at any rate, this is 'the book of the year'. Finally, as to literary style, the volume might have been written by an Englishman.

*Russia and the Universal Church*, by Vladimir Solovyev. (Geoffrey Bles, 15s.)

This volume, ably translated from the French by Mr. Herbert Rees, falls under two subjects. Solovyev (1853-1900), believing that it is for educated Russian Christians 'to formulate the living Word which old Russia conceived and which New Russia must declare to the world', first arraigns the Orthodox hierarchy of Czarist days for abandoning this 'Word' at a crucial point, and then gives his own exposition of it. The crucial point is that the Czarist hierarchy submitted to the State in the realm in which it ought to have submitted to the Pope. He says, in effect, 'You have no king but Caesar'. This argued arraignment fills two-thirds of the book. While it is not directed against Protestants—though they are accused, in passing, of 'bad faith'—it follows familiar lines, except that there is a very interesting attempt to show that the early Christological controversies drew with them large political and social consequences. It is not at this point, however, that this layman may be called the 'father of modern Russian theology'. Some writers about him, indeed, claim that Papalism is not integral to his own thought, and the later development of the doctrine of *sobornost* might be regarded as the silent answer of Orthodox intellectuals to his argument. It is in Solovyev's philosophical theology and theodicy that his importance lies. In the last part of this book he gives a brief but comprehensive account of his whole system. He begins with the Trinity, for with him this is the basic doctrine, not only in theology, but in political and social theory, and in everything else. He rightly repudiates Neo-Platonism, yet, as with Plotinus, his approach is fundamentally psychological. He prefers to speak of 'hypostases' rather than 'Persons'. In the hypostatical Spirit God turns upon Himself in 'enjoyment'. Under theodicy he has a trinitarian account of the Church—the Incarnate Word, the Blessed Virgin (who represents the receptive principle), and the whole body of believers. Similarly, his account of the right kind of human life is trinitarian—there is the universal Church, there is the universal State, and there is the universal people. It is for the Church to direct (but not to coerce) the State. In this book both Church and State are autocratic, though Solovyev mitigates autocracy by the recognition of a spirit of 'prophecy' diffused among the people. In his account of the universe he repudiates, of course, all Gnostic doctrines of an evil Demiurge, yet his doctrine that evil, as over against the 'incarnate Sophia', is fundamentally chaos has Gnostic affinities. His favourite Biblical passage is the account of Wisdom in Proverbs 8. He knows nothing of any doctrine of historical development in the Old Testament, which he treats in a semi-Philonian way. At the end of his book he deals with the Seven Sacraments. Of these, three—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—represent liberty, equality, and fraternity, which are 'the three Sacraments of the rights of man'. The other four (trinitarianism for once eluding the writer) are 'the Sacraments of the duties of man', an example of an ingenuity that sometimes tends to over-reach itself. Of course it is only possible here to name some salient points. If anyone wishes to trace the development of modern Russian theology, he might well begin with 'Part Three' in this book.

*Jesus Christ is Alive*, by J. Scott Lidgett. (The Epworth Press, 3s. 6d.)

When Dr. Church unexpectedly urged him to write another book, Dr. Lidgett found that he had been pondering long on a subject which is very much up to date. In this small volume he has poured out riches. As he writes one short chapter after another, he sums up the message of most of the New Testament books. While there is only one chapter that expressly deals with Paul, of course the Apostle is all but ubiquitous. Again, many a sentence enshrines a truth of large scope. Elsewhere Dr. Lidgett has shown that, when necessary, he can use long and complex sentences, but here he shows that a master can be brief too. By implication he tells us his mind about some of the discussions in current theology. For instance, he believes in all the miracles of Jesus. While on one or two details one septuagenarian junior would not quite agree with his nonagenarian senior, here is a brief but satisfying exposition of the evangelical faith. Dr. Lidgett ends with a chapter that shows how the Living Christ has been the life of the Church through all the centuries. Most of the chapters are only two or three pages long. To read and ponder one of them would enrich any Christian's private devotion.

*The New Testament Doctrine of Baptism*, by W. F. Flemington. (S.P.C.K., 10s. 6d.)

It was quite time that someone drew together all the findings and opinions of scholars about the Jewish customs of 'baptism' and the Christian doctrine and practice of this sacrament in the first century. Mr. Flemington has done this for us in this very able and welcome book. In particular, he has done what few evangelical students have done—in expounding the passages where Paul speaks of baptism he has shown that the Apostle undoubtedly taught that in this sacrament 'something happened', and that in this 'something' three things were involved—the historical fact of the Death and Resurrection of Christ, the participation of (an adult) convert in these, and a concomitant experience through faith of 'the witness of the Spirit' with all its 'associated ideas'. He is undoubtedly right too in pointing out that in New Testament baptism, as on the mission field today, these three things normally went indissolubly together. It would have been as impossible to separate them as to distinguish copper from tin when one handles bronze. Mr. Flemington examines every passage both in Paul and in all the other New Testament books with the careful thoroughness of the true scholar. He adds too all the passages where there may be an implied reference to this sacrament, and he is master of the relevant literature. One might ask a question here and there. For instance, when Jesus used the phrase 'born of water and the Spirit', may not 'water' refer to John's baptism—a reference that Nicodemus would have understood? Jesus agreed with John that even Pharisees must repent. Similarly, may not the word 'baptisms' in Hebrews 10<sup>6</sup> refer to John's baptism and Christian baptism (cf. Acts 19<sup>18</sup>)? Again, when Jesus spoke of a baptism that He must 'accomplish', may He not have meant that only the Cross could 'perfect' His baptism by John? This would accord with Mr. Flemington's ably argued contention that it is our Lord's own Baptism and His Death and Resurrection, taken as a whole, that constitute His 'institution' of this sacrament. At the end of his book Mr. Flemington has a chapter in defence of Infant Baptism that is very opportune because just now there is a tendency, in unexpected places, to assume that there is no real evidence that this was ever practised in the first century. Similarly, there is an appendix that deals with recent discussions of what is now called 'confirmation' so far as they relate to the New Testament. Except at a point noted below, this book is almost as comprehensive as it is unitary. Mr. Flemington deals fully with the exceptional case of Cornelius, where the experience and the symbol fell apart. Ought he not to have explained why he does not add the case of Philip's

baptisms in Samaria? Cornelius's case, however, not only shows that baptism was not essential to the distinctively Christian experience, but leads one to ask how the symbol was 'effective' and what it 'effected'. Here Mr. Flemington quotes Wheeler Robinson's careful phrase that for Hebrew thought such an act as Jeremiah's in putting a yoke upon his neck 'in some small degree' effected the captivity that it symbolized. Here one may enter a *caveat*. Is there no difference between the idea that a symbolic act furthers 'in some small degree' a future event and the idea that a similar act *completely* effects a change in individual character on the spot? What is more important, was the Hebrew concept true? If it were not, what of the parallel? It is at this one point that I could wish that Mr. Flemington had said something more. But he has written a book of rare merit.

*The Bible from Day to Day.* (Oxford University Press, 6s.)

In this much-needed book a Committee of the Church of Scotland turns to private and family worship. There is here a 'Bible reading' for each day of the year, which needs no explanation except 'the short heading' that is provided. The Old Testament covers the first five months of the year, and the New Testament the rest, except that a Psalm occurs about every ten days. There is a list of readings for the Christian Festivals, and a chronological table that gives the periods of the various books. Both the Prophets, who are rightly given a good deal of space, and the Epistles are taken in chronological order. The editors, whoever they are, have often deftly combined parts of more than one chapter, and, under the Synoptic Gospels, of more than one book. The Authorized Version is used, with an occasional variant (sometimes from R.V.) in a footnote. The book is a triumph.

*The Faith of Robert Barclay*, by J. Philip Wragge. (Friends House, 5s.)

The Friends' doctrine that the Inner Light is the ultimate authority for every man means that they acknowledge no authoritative book, but they agree that *Barclay's Apology* comes near being one. In Part II of this book Mr. Wragge has printed Barclay's Fifteen Propositions and given us a careful and skilful collection of extracts to show how Barclay himself expounded them, adding, where necessary, selections from his other works. Probably this could not have been better done. In Part I Mr. Wragge has sketched Barclay's life, shown how far the emphasis of Quaker teaching now differs from Barclay's, and discussed the relevance of his doctrine today. Barclay's style sometimes seems almost tortuous, but, when his longest sentences are pondered, they nearly always prove to have a quite clear meaning. On the crucial doctrine of authority this is perhaps hardly so, for while, as Quakerism requires, Barclay counts the authority of the New Testament 'secondary', for him it is also regulative, as this book abundantly shows. Yet he himself had no difficulty here, for 'the Testimony of the Spirit recorded in the Scriptures, doth answer the Testimony of the same Spirit in the heart, even as face answereth face in a glass'. But which is the reflexion? Such a question, of course, is only a hint on a large and difficult subject. Both Barclay and McLeod Campbell have been called 'the only great theologian that Scotland has produced'. Shall we call it 'a dead heat'? In this book there is 'the essence of Barclay'.

*Peter Taylor Forsyth, Director of Souls*, compiled and edited by Harry Escott. (The Epworth Press, 6s.)

*The Cruciality of the Cross*, by P. T. Forsyth. (Independent Press, 8s. 6d.)

Before Dr. Forsyth was appointed Principal of Hackney College he held five pastorates. During this time he wrote a number of small books, not easily obtainable now. Mr. Escott has gleaned sheaves from their rich harvest. Later, when at

Hackney, Dr. Forsyth used to talk to his students about their high calling at a mid-week Service, and happily one of his hearers took notes of them. Mr. Escott adds some of these (along with four addresses to children, 'which are neither better nor worse than many other preachers'). He has also prefaced his book with a very discerning 'Appraisal'. Forsyth was never content merely to borrow, but by a process of 'higher criticism' Mr. Escott shows from what very various wells he drew water. In this book of 'practical writings' the reader will find none of the difficulties that attend Forsyth's theological style. They are 'practical' in the sense that they will help a reader to practise the faith that is in Jesus. Forsyth knew how to be both opulent and sparing in words. In this book he shows himself a master of the spiritual life. Often one of his sentences 'pierces to the dividing of joints and marrow'. He sees as deeply into the heart as into the truth. This is a rare book of devotion, for it 'feeds with meat and not with milk'.

Forsyth's four chief theological works were all published between 1907 and 1910. Three of them have already appeared in the series of reprints issued by the Independent Press. The fourth, *The Cruciality of the Cross*, is now added. In eighty pages (for the last chapter is an *addendum*) it provides a student of theology with the 'irreducible minimum' for the understanding of this master.

*Reflections of a Back-Bench Bishop*, by H. A. Wilson. (Latimer House, 5s.)

In this book the Bishop of Chelmsford looks first at the Church of England and then at the world with a candid and sagacious eye. He likes 'brass tacks', he knows the uses of a 'pinch of salt', and he feels fairly safe when he is in a minority. Except in a chapter on Reunion he only refers incidentally to the Free Churches, but he would admit their baptized members to Communion in the Anglican Church. On the other hand, he seems hardly aware that the Anglican Church is not the only Church that has spread through the British Commonwealth and beyond in the last century or so—though he makes an exception of the Baptists in Russia—and, having shown that in his diocese the number of 'gross moral lapses' among the seven hundred clergy averages hardly more than one a year, he goes on, without further evidence, to claim that 'the figure' is one that 'no other ministry' would even equal. He takes his own line about many of the present plans and problems of the Anglican Church—suggesting, for instance, that there might well be a lay President of the Church Assembly. On wider issues, he thinks that within fifty years the English population, much reduced in number, will largely return to the land, and therefore to a less hectic life, and so to religion. The book shows how a man of faith who is also 'a man of affairs' has his own *charisma* in the Church.

*Heritage, Chailey, 1903-48*. (21s., direct from the Old Heritage, Chailey, Sussex.)

This superb book tells a great story. In 1894 the first of many 'Guilds of Brave, Poor things' made a beginning at a small tea-party in a hall belonging to the West London Mission. But, good though this was, it was not enough for Mrs. C. W. Kimmins. In 1903, with a five-pound note and seven crippled boys, she began the Heritage Craft Schools in a disused work-house in Sussex. And now this 'grain of mustard seed' has become a mighty tree. Over the door of one of the buildings there are the words 'Men made Here', carved by an armless boy with his toes. This gives the key to the mind and spirit of this magnificent piece of pioneer work. Over a million and a half has been given and spent! After looking at any one of the many fine photographs the Christian heart says 'Thank God'. Among many of Mrs. Kimmins's helpers Dr. Lidgett has more than an honourable place. Now 'Chailey' is to be taken over by the Government. May a 'Department' know how to tread in the footsteps of one of the best of 'dictators', as one of Mrs. Kimmins's sons calls his mother.



*The Light on the Moor*, by Frederick C. Gill. (The Epworth Press, 4s.)

In cameos, says the dictionary, 'colours are used to give background'. Well, Mr. Gill is an artist in cameos. He likes Cornish folk (and others); he likes old people; he likes villagers; most of all, he loves the kind of people whom Jesus called the 'meek'. Not a few of these eleven short stories tell of the quiet pathos and quiet power of quiet lives. Many readers of the *Methodist Recorder* will be glad that these stories have been reprinted.

*The Captured Archives*, by Bernard Newman. (Latimer House, 8s. 6d.)

Here at last are some incontrovertible *facts* about Russia. When the Allies took Berlin, they found the archives of the German Foreign Office intact, and the Americans have published a translation of the correspondence between Berlin and Moscow relative to their treaty of 1939 to 1941. The core of Mr. Bernard Newman's book is a series of extracts from this translation, but he provides a prelude and sequel, and he elucidates the background stage by stage. Both by his exact knowledge of the multitude of other documents and by his intimate acquaintance with countries and persons, he is as safe a guide as may be. He does not fail to do what he can to put the case from the Russian point of view, and he is no thick-and-thin defender of the Allies. It is plain that Molotov, like Hitler, believes that 'all is fair' in diplomacy. It is plain too that, however opportunist the U.S.S.R. may be sometimes, making compacts with adherents of other ideologies than its own, it is not inconsistent. All the while it practises two beliefs—that sooner or later there *must* be strife between capitalism and communism whatever any man or all men do, and that in any and every nation communism must at first, not be chosen, but imposed by force. Mr. Newman has a very useful chapter at the end of his book on 'What must the democracies now do?' It does not present a policy, but surveys the ground of possible policies. This book is a sad record—all the sadder if it be compared with such books as Solovyev and Brunner's, reviewed above. Yet the latter do show that there have been and are Germans and Russians who indomitably 'keep the faith'.

*Functional Change in Early English*, by Donald W. Lee. (George Banta Publishing Co., Menasha, Wisconsin.)

Some people object to such phrases as 'to contact' and 'to voice'—i.e. to the use of nouns as verbs, and *vice versa*. Today this process has gone farther in U.S.A. than in England. Dr. Lee has been at pains to 'dredge' the Oxford English Dictionary, or rather the quotations in it, in order to show that the process is perennial in English. He deals with the many examples between 1400 and 1600, taking half a century at a time, and furnishing an expository apparatus, etc.

#### BOOKLETS AND PAMPHLETS

The S.C.M. is publishing a shilling series of 'short studies of great modern Christians' under the title 'Servants of the Universal Church'. The first three all tell of sons of rural clergy, who may be called 'manifold men' with a single master-passion. They are *Jungle Doctor, the Story of Albert Schweitzer*, by Dorothea Salmon, *Nathan Söderblom*, by H. G. G. Herklots, and *Charles Henry Brent*, by Frederick W. Kates. A very good series for young Christians. . . . In Magnus C. Ratter's *Reverence through Schweitzer* (Lindsey Press, 6d.), he says, in passing, that 'Reverence for Life' is 'the skeleton-key which will open all doors locked to earlier thinkers!' But his booklet, which is a kind of sermon about his hero, is full of 'punch', and, like all good sermons, it gets home. . . . Two new numbers are to hand in the series

of pamphlets in which 'Unitarians state their faith' (Lindsey Press, 6d. each). In one, *A Free Religious Faith in Outline*, Mr. Raymond V. Holt describes both the distinctive beliefs of Unitarians today and the grounds on which they hold them. The statement is as able as it is brief. The other pamphlet, written in a lively style, is an equally able account by Mr. P. Milner Oliver of the Unitarian doctrine of man under the title *The Divine Experiment*. He argues that God seeks to evolve a creature akin to Himself. Near the end there is a fine eulogy of Jesus. In reply to these pamphlets Trinitarians would say—very much more than can be said here! . . . 'Is Christ calling you into His ministry?' Mr. John T. Watson sets this question fairly and squarely before our serious young fellows in *Call to the Ministry* (The Epworth Press, 6d.). A timely pamphlet. (But are not Mazzini and Garibaldi confused?) . . . Dr. William McMillan has compiled a *Book of Common Order for use in the Sunday-school* (Oxford University Press, 1s. 6d.). It provides forms of worship for the Sundays of two months, with 'additional forms' for the great Church festivals, etc. They were drawn up for Presbyterians, but any Church could use this admirable book. . . . *Artificial Human Insemination* (S.P.C.K., 2s. 6d.) is the very careful and candid report of a Commission of doctors, lawyers, and theologians appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Twelve of the thirteen members agree that 'artificial insemination with donated semen involves a breach of marriage'. The extreme paucity at present of data under 'sociological and eugenic implications' is emphasized. . . . In *Christ and Sanctification* (Pickering and Inglis, 3s.) a 'saint', in the word's true sense, gives simple but sure guidance to those who seriously want to be saints. It is a reprint of eight chapters from Bishop Moule's *Thoughts on Christian Sanctity*. . . . *How to Read the Synoptic Gospels* (S.P.C.K., 9d.) is another welcome reprint. It contains three lectures by Dr. Scott Holland, a scholar who knew how to talk to 'Everyman', under the very pertinent titles—'Pre-suppositions', 'Limitations', and 'Assumptions'. . . . The Lutterworth, S.C.M., and S.P.C.K. presses have combined to issue two bibliographies, *A General Bibliography of Christian Theology, History, and Apologetic* (3d.) and *A Popular Bibliography of the Christian Faith* (3d.). They include all relevant subjects, beginning with the Bible. The unnamed editors have made some quite good selections.

## NOTABLE ARTICLES IN PERIODICALS

*Journal of Theological Studies*, July–October (Oxford Press, 16s. per annum).

The Origin and Meaning of the Christian Use of 'the Word', by J. Y. Campbell.

An Examination of the Linguistic Evidence adduced against the Unity of Authorship of the First Epistle of John and the Fourth Gospel, by W. G. Wilson.

Aramaic Studies and the New Testament: The Unpublished Work of the late A. J. Wensinck of Leyden, by Matthew Black.

The Origins of Prime, by O. Chadwick.

*Theologische Zeitschrift*, July–August (Verlag F. Reinhardt, Basel, Fr. 28 per annum).

Offenbarung und Geschichte im Alten Testament, by Walther Eichrodt.

Versuche zur Erklärung von Hiob 19, 24, by Johann Jakob Stamm.

Zehn Jahre nordamerikanischer Literatur zum Alten Testament, by W. Baumgartner.

Der johannische Gebrauch doppeldeutiger Ausdrücke als Schlüssel zum Verständnis des vierten Evangeliums, by Oscar Cullmann.

Der Briefwechsel zwischen Johannes Buxtorf II, und Johannes Coccejus, by Ernst Stachelin.

*The Scottish Journal of Theology*, September. (Oliver and Boyd, 3s. 6d.)

The Uniqueness of the Word of God, by John McConnachie.

Toward a Theology of the Old Testament, by Norman W. Porteous.

Concerning the Ministry (*re The Apostolic Ministry*), by J. H. S. Burleigh, T. F. Torrance, and F. W. Camfield.

*The Journal of Religion*, July. (University of Chicago Press, via Cambridge Press, \$1.85.)

A Study of Kierkegaard and Hegel, by Paul Ramsey.

The Eschatology of Jesus in Recent Criticism and Interpretation, by Amos N. Wilder.

The Resurrection of the Body, II (from Paul to Augustine), by Robert M. Grant.

- Religion in Life*, Autumn. (Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, via The Epworth Press, 9s. 6d. per annum.)  
 Church, School, and Supreme Court, by F. Ernest Johnson.  
 The Language of the Faith, by Charles D. Kean.  
 What Must the Negro do to be Saved?, by Alexander P. Shaw.  
 The Possibility of Methodist and Episcopal Union, by Paul S. Sanders.
- The International Review of Missions*, October. (Oxford Press, 3s.)  
 The Missionary Legacy to the Church Universal, by John A. Mackay.  
 The Bicentenary of Jonathan Edwards's 'Humble Attempt', by John Foster.  
 The Jewish-Christian Controversy concerning Israel, by Jakob Jocz.  
 Fear, Duty, and Love as Ultimate Motives for Christian Missions, by Nels F. S. Ferré.  
 'Live' articles by Missionaries on Women's Work in West African Villages (M. Mary Senior),  
 Problems in Post-War New Guinea (H. J. Teutscher), Church Unity in Malaya (D. D. Chelliah),  
 and the Situation in Jerusalem (by E. F. F. Bishop).
- The Expository Times*, October. (T. & T. Clark, 1s. 3d.)  
 Niebuhr on Progress and Sin, by R. A. Hickin.  
 The 'Son of Man' in the Old Biblical Literature, by Matthew Black.  
 Punishment—Retributive or Reformatory?, by J. S. MacArthur.
- do., November.  
 The 'Son of Man' in the Teaching of Jesus, by Matthew Black.  
 The Church, by Leonard Hodgson, and The Church's Witness to God's Design, by John Foster  
 (Amsterdam Broadcasts).
- The Hibbert Journal*, October. (Allen & Unwin, 12s. 6d. per annum.)  
 The Cinderella of the Values (Beauty), by L. P. Jacks.  
 By What Authority? (in Democracy), by Hamilton Fyfe.  
 Pascal's Meditations on Society, by W. Stark.  
 The Authenticity of the Pauline Epistles, by William C. Wake.  
 The Rise of Life and Man, a New Theory, by John Nance.
- Bibliotheca Sacra*, July–September. (Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas, \$1.)  
 The Saving Work of the Triune God, by L. Sperry Chafer.  
 Jesus and Pilate, by Everett Falconer Harrison.  
 Evangelical Mysticism (Medieval), by Peder Stiansen.
- The Congregational Quarterly*, October. (Independent Press, 2s. 6d.)  
 Isaac Watts: Some Bicentenary Considerations, by W. Gordon Robinson.  
 Evangelism in its World Setting, by Ernest A. Payne.  
 Chosen People: the Approach to Anti-Semitism, by W. D. Davies.  
 The Christian Answer to Freud, by Leslie D. Weatherhead.
- Die Zeichen der Zeit*, Heft 6, 1948. (Evangelische Verlagsanstalt Gmb. H., Berlin No. 18, Georgen-  
 kirchstrasse 70, R.M. 1.50.)  
 Von einfältigen Dienst, by Grünter Jacob.  
 Kirche und Sekte, by Helmut Appel.  
 Der Hammer des Propheten, by Joachim Wilde.
- do., Heft 7–8, 1948. (R.M. 3.)  
 Die Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (several articles relating to the Conference at Eisenach  
 in July).  
 Die Einigung des deutschen Luthertums, by Walter Zimmermann.  
 Jesus Christus der Herr alles Rechts, by Reinhard Mumm.
- The Bulletin*, Records and Proceedings of the Committee on History and Archives of the United Church  
 of Canada, Number One (United Church Publishing House, Toronto).  
 About half of the first issue of this magazine gives an account of the history of the archives of the  
 Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian Churches in Canada, or rather, of the very  
 interesting story that they reveal. The price is not mentioned.
- The Yale Review*, Autumn. (Yale University Press, via Oxford Press, \$1.)  
 Ancient Pistol, by Leslie Hotson.  
 Flaubert and the Spirit of '48, by Harry Levin.  
 The Brazilian Scene, by D. Lee Hamilton.
- The Journal of Politics*, May and August. (University of Florida, \$3.50 per annum.)  
 The May issue contains the first part of a survey of 'the Southern (U.S.A.) Political Scene,  
 1938–48'. There are eight articles by experts on Social Change, Economics, the Supreme Court,  
 Foreign Policy, Southern Legislatures and Governors, etc. In the August number six other articles  
 complete the survey.
- Studies in Philology*, October (University of North Carolina, via Cambridge Press, \$1.25).  
 Cultural Relations in the Middle Ages: Nicholas Trevet and Nicholas of Prato, by Ruth J. Dean.  
 'The Canterbury Tales' and their Narrators, by J. R. Hulbert.  
 The Lord Marquess Idleness: The First English Book of Essays, by Thomas Sidney.  
 Some Ethical Aspects of Matthew Prior's Poetry, by Monroe K. Spears.  
 David Garrick, Manager: Notes on the Theatre as a Cultural Institution, by Dougald MacMillan.

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